A

SUMMARY

OF

UNIVERSAL HISTORY,

FROM

THE CREATION

TO THE

PRESENT TIME.

IN LETTERS FROM A FATHER TO HIS SON.

By FRANCIS DOBBS, Esq.

MEMBER FOR THE BOROUGH OF CHARLEMONT, IN IRELAND.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Firſt Volume of this Work was originally printed in the Lifetime of the late James Earl of Charlemont, to whom it is dedicated.

THOSE who wiſh to know Mr. Dobbs's Thoughts of the preſent Times, and of what is to come, will find them in a diſtinct Work, ſold by the Publiſhers of this.

THE Eight Volumes of UNIVERSAL HISTORY, now publiſhed, bring it down to the Year of Chriſt 1715; and the Ninth, which will be ready in a Month or two, continues it to the preſent Day.

October, 1800.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Earl and Counteſs of

CHARLEMONT.

PERMIT me to dedicate the following ſheets to you, as a ſmall teſtimony of that reſpect which I feel for Lord and Lady Charlemont. The diſintereſted and uniform Patriotiſm of your Lordſhip, would alone have engaged my admiration; but the amiable conduct of you and your Lady in private life, perhaps comes ſtill nearer the heart. I ſhall only add, that I am one of the many who bear teſtimony to the virtues of both. And I remain, with the ſincereſt gratitude,

Your obliged

and faithful ſervant,

FRANCIS DOBBS.

CONTENTS FIRST ÆRA,

Which ends in the year 1019 before Chriſt.

FIRST LETTER, page 1.

From the Creation to the Flood.

SECOND LETTER, p. 6.

From the Flood to the death of Jacob.

THIRD LETTER, p. 13.

From the death of Jacob to the time that Saul was made King over Iſrael.

FOURTH LETTER, p. 22.

From Saul's acceſſion to the death of David, 1019 years before the Chriſtian Æra.

FIFTH LETTER, p. 34.

The hiſtory of Egypt, and the other countries of the world, from the Creation to the year 1019.

SIXTH LETTER, p. 46.

Obſervations.

SECOND ÆRA.

Which ends in the Year 790 before Chriſt.

FIRST LETTER, p. 57.

Treats of the Iſraelites and Egyptians.

SECOND LETTER, p. 83.

Treats of the reſt of Aſia and Africa.

THIRD LETTER, p. 98.

Treats of Peloponneſus.

FOURTH LETTER, p. 114.

Treats of the continental part of Greece, and alſo of Epirus and Thrace; concluding with the Grecian Mythology aſcribed to Orpheus.

FIFTH LETTER, p. 149.

Treats of the Iſlands and Italy.

SIXTH LETTER, p. 162.

Obſervations on the period between the year 1019, when Solomon aſcended the throne of Iſrael, and the year 790, at which time Pul founded the Aſſyrian Empire.

THIRD ÆRA.

Which ends in the year 536 before Chriſt.

FIRST LETTER, p. 172.

Treats of the Iſraelites, Aſſyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Perſians.

SECOND LETTER, p. 190.

Treats of the other States of Aſia, and alſo of Africa.

THIRD LETTER, p. 204.

Treats of Peloponneſus.

FOURTH LETTER, p. 224.

Treats of the continental parts of Greece, Epirus, Thrace, and Macedon.

FIFTH LETTER, p. 237.

Treats of the Iſlands, Italy, and the reſt of Europe.

SIXTH LETTER, p. 275.

Obſervations on the period between the year 790, and the year 536, when Cyrus founded the Medo-Perſian Empire.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM aware, that ſeveral objections may be ſtarted to the order in which I have placed many events of antiquity; but as I have in no inſtance ventured to depart from Sir Iſaac Newton's Chronology, I truſt I ſhall eſcape the cenſure of the learned.

This work can be of little uſe to men of literature, unleſs I ſhould fortunately throw ſome new lights on the order of Providence, and the vaſt deſign of this terreſtrial creation. But to thoſe whoſe occupations do not admit of deep reſearches, I truſt it will give a general view of the world, that they have not at preſent the means of obtaining: and I flatter myſelf, the youth of both ſexes

will find, in the following ſheets, amuſement blended with inſtruction.

It is neceſſary to obſerve, that the only æra I uſe, is by computing years before and after the vulgar date of Chriſt's nativity.

FIRST ÆRA

OF

Univerſal Hiſtory.

FIRST LETTER.

MY DEAR BOY,

I BEHOLD with infinite ſatisfaction, that you are already eager in the purſuit of knowledge. I am alſo pleaſed to find, that Hiſtory is your favourite ſtudy, becauſe it well deſerves that preference which you are inclined to give it. But it is not eaſy to obtain a juſt information amidſt the voluminous and various works on this ſubject. It ſhall, therefore, be my taſk to give you a comprehenſive, yet conciſe view, of thoſe

events which preceded the introduction of Chriſtianity; and if time will afterwards permit me, I ſhall continue it to the preſent æra.

Chronology and Geography are juſtly ſtyled the eyes of hiſtory. As to the Chronology prior to the Flood, and for ſome ages ſubſequent thereto, we have only Scripture to refer to. Heſiod and Homer are the oldeſt prophane authors that have reached us; and, according to Sir Iſaac Newton, they flouriſhed about 870 years before Chriſt.

The eaſieſt and pleaſanteſt way of obtaining the great outline of Geography, is to read with the neceſſary maps upon your table. When any particular country or conſiderable place is mentioned, ſatisfy yourſelf of its ſituation. Thus you will acquire a general knowledge of this branch of literature, almoſt without its being an object of ſtudy; and except as to your own country, and thoſe with which it is particularly connected, more is totally unneceſſary.

It is pretty generally agreed, that this

earth was formed 1656 years before the Flood. Many controverſies have ariſen, as to the time from thence to the birth of Chriſt; but the opinion moſt adopted is, that the Meſſiah was born in the year of the world 4000. The Chriſtian æra, in common uſe, would however place his birth in the year 4004, as the ableſt inveſtigators have agreed, that Chriſt was born four years prior to the period we aſſign to it.

We find in the beginning of Geneſis, that God, after forming all other things, made man in his own image, and gave him the name of Adam. From his ſide, Eve, the firſt of women, was taken, and preſented to him as his companion. Theſe parents of the human race were then perfectly innocent, and perfectly happy; but the Devil, in the ſhape of a ſerpent, tempted Eve to eat of a fruit which was forbidden, and ſhe prevailed on Adam to be the partaker of her guilt. Thence the miſery of their offſpring. It pleaſed God, however, to comfort the fallen pair with a promiſe, that in

the courſe of time, the ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's or Devil's head, and reſtore mankind to that felicity which they had forfeited.

There is, no doubt, a myſtery in this account. But is not every thing we ſee a myſtery to us? We behold the ſun—the moon—and all the firmament of Heaven. We behold the ſeed become a plant—that plant bear fruit—that fruit, ſeed—and that ſeed be again productive of itſelf. We behold our own exiſtence, and all the wonders of the human frame; and though we know that all theſe things are, yet we cannot in the ſmalleſt degree comprehend them. Then let us not diſbelieve Scripture, becauſe of the myſterious truths which it contains.

From the Creation to the Flood but little is recorded. Cain, the firſt born of Eve, ſlew Abel his virtuous brother. Enoch, one of Adam's poſterity, was highly diſtinguiſhed for his righteouſneſs, and carried up into Heaven without taſting of death. And as to the generality of mankind, we are told,

they fell into the moſt abominable depravity, Noah and his family alone excepted:

God now determined to bring an univerſal deluge on the earth. Noah was, therefore, ordered to conſtruct an Ark, and he, and his ſons, together with their wives, and a ſufficient number of birds and other animals, for future generation, having entered into it, every other creature was deſtroyed.

All parts of the earth confirm the truth of this miraculous event; the ſkeletons of animals, from different climes, being frequently diſcovered in the bowels of countries, where they were never known to have been natives; and ſhells, and other productions of the ſea, are found not only in the midſt of vaſt continents, but alſo on the tops of the higheſt mountains. I know there are unbelievers of great abilities, who have endeavoured to contradict the ſacred authors in regard to the Flood, as well as in other things; but I truſt, on a fair and impartial inveſtigation, you will be convinced, that Scripture is founded on a rock of truth

that cannot be ſhaken, and that all which is oppoſed to it, ariſes from fable and abſurdity.

SECOND LETTER.

THE Ark reſted either on mount Ararat, in Armenia, or on the mountains of Bactria; and Noah, with his three ſons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, firſt ſettled in the adjacent country. When they had conſiderably multiplied, they removed to the plains of Shinaar, where they began a great building, which was afterwards called the Tower of Babel.

At this time there was only one language amongſt men; but it pleaſed God to divide the offspring of Noah and his ſons into different ſocieties. For this purpoſe a confuſion of tongues took place. Thoſe who underſtood one another thereupon aſſociated together, and extending themſelves in all quarters, they gave riſe to the ſubſequent nations of the earth.

This was a miracle:—but ſurely not a more extraordinary one than the firſt power of ſpeech. That there was a variety of lan-

guages at a very early period, we do know; and is there a more rational way of accounting for them? On this diſperſion, Shem and his deſcendants ſpread to the Eaſt; Ham towards Africa; and Japhet to the weſt of Aſia. From this period to the birth of Abraham, there is nothing particular; and for ſome centuries afterwards, we have no account of the different people in the world, except what is blended with the Jewiſh Hiſtory.

Abraham, from whom all Iſrael is deſcended, was of the poſterity of Shem, whom Noah foretold ſhould be diſtinguiſhed above his brethren. God accordingly viſited Abraham, confirming the promiſe made to Eve; and informing him, that in his ſeed all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed. At this time, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, was old and barren; but, contrary to the common courſe of nature, ſhe brought forth a ſon, whoſe name was Iſaac. When Iſaac was forty years old, he married Rebekah, by whom he had two ſons at a birth. Eſau

was the firſt born of theſe, but ſold his birth-right to Jacob his younger brother; and Jacob, by the advice of his mother, afterwards deceived his aged father to pronounce a bleſſing upon him, which was intended for Eſau.

It ſeems that Iſaac had the power of naming in which branch of his family the promiſe ſhould be fulfilled. Jacob, however, was not perſonally to benefit by the bleſſing he obtained. His ſeed was indeed to rule over that of Eſau; but we find that he himſelf made every ſubmiſſion to his brother, and towards the cloſe of his life he complained, that his days had been few and miſerable. I ſhall here obſerve, that the Bible faithfully records the vices, as well as virtues of men. You are, therefore, not to wonder when you find even thoſe who are choſen to fulfil the will of God guilty of offences. All men are, more or leſs, frail; but, no doubt, the great ſearcher of hearts found the virtues of ſuch as he preferred greater, in proportion to their faults, than thoſe of other men.

Jacob married two ſiſters, who were his kinſwomen, and whoſe names were Leah and Rachel. By theſe and his concubines he had twelve ſons, in the following order: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Iſſachar, Zebulun, Dan, Gad, Aſher, Napthali, Joſeph, and Benjamin. Of theſe Joſeph was the father's favourite; and the envy of his brethren was greatly enhanced, when Joſeph related ſome dreams prognoſtic of his future greatneſs. They therefore ſold him to ſome merchants of Midia, and pretended to Jacob that he was devoured by a wild beaſt.

Theſe Midianites carried him to Egypt, where Potiphar, the Captain of Pharaoh's guards, became the purchaſer of Joſeph. His zeal and fidelity ſoon recommended him to his maſter, who at length entruſted him with the chief management of all his affairs. This proſperity was however of ſhort duration, and the virtue of Joſeph was to be expoſed to the ſevereſt trials.

The wife of Potiphar became enamoured of this favoured ſervant. Finding him inſenſible to her more delicate overtures, ſhe

openly ſolicited him to defile the bed of his maſter. But he was proof againſt every attack, and every temptation; and the irritated woman thereupon falſely accuſed him to Potiphar, by whom he was caſt into priſon.

In the ſame jail two of the King's ſervants were confined, the one his baker, the other his butler. Each of theſe had dreams that affected them, and on their relating them before Joſeph, he undertook to explain them. The interpretation was, that the baker ſhould be put to death, but the butler was to be reſtored to favour; and both of theſe predictions accordingly took place.

Not long after the reſtoration of the butler, Pharaoh himſelf had two dreams which greatly perplexed him, and being made acquainted with the knowledge which Joſeph had diſplayed in unfolding ſuch matters, he was immediately ſent for. By him the hidden meaning of the dreams was explained, and his reward was that poſt in Egypt which was next to royalty itſelf.

Thus the injury intended him by his brethren became the foundation of his fortunes.

Though at firſt his virtuous conduct to the wife of Potiphar was the cauſe of his impriſonment, yet we find it was alſo the ſource of all his future greatneſs. From this you will naturally draw two concluſions. When a misfortune happens, it may, for aught you know, turn out to your advantage: or when, for the ſake of virtue, you are a ſufferer, perhaps that very ſuffering is only to render your worth the more conſpicuous.

The interpretation of the King's dreams was, that there ſhould be ſeven plentiful years followed by as many of ſcarcity. The plentiful ones came, and Joſeph laid up as much corn as would ſerve during that ſterility which he foreſaw. It accordingly happened, and was not confined to the country of Egypt; for Jacob, who by the order of God had taken the name of Iſrael, was now in danger of periſhing. He did not live at a great diſtance, and therefore ſent his ten eldeſt ſons to buy corn from the Egyptians. This article was immediately under the inſpection of Joſeph, who perfectly recognized his brethren, though

they had no recollection of him, and for the preſent he refrained from a diſcovery.

Joſeph well knew that the famine muſt ſoon oblige them to return. He therefore inquired as to the reſt of their family, and finding his younger brother Benjamin was alive, who had not been concerned in ſelling him, he ordered them to bring him the next time they came, if they hoped for more corn. They were ſoon obliged to reviſit Egypt, and then Joſeph revealed himſelf. What the ten muſt have felt is eaſier conceived than deſcribed; but Joſeph reproached them not, for, on the contrary, we find him reconciling them to themſelves. Do not you approve of this conduct, and feel how ſuperior it was to that of inſult or revenge? If then it ſhould happen, that an enemy ſhould ever be in your power, you will, I truſt, imitate that example, which you cannot but admire.

Joſeph now obtained from Pharaoh a ſettlement in the land of Egypt for Iſrael and his family. They then conſiſted of ſeventy perſons, beſides their wives; and Benjamin, together with Joſeph and his family, are to

be added to that number. After this removal Iſrael lived ſeventeen years, and before his death, he, amongſt other things, foretold, that from Judah ſhould ſpring the promiſed Meſſiah. Joſeph, who lived to a conſiderable age, alſo propheſied the deliverance of the Iſraelites, and gave directions that his bones ſhould be carried with them, when they ſet out for the promiſed land; the hiſtory of which ſhall be given in the enſuing letter.

THIRD LETTER.

WE find that the Iſraelites, during their ſtay in Egypt, increaſed to ſuch a degree as to become a terror to the Egyptians. They were therefore reduced to the moſt abject ſtate of ſervitude, and even that was deemed inſufficient; for the King at length ordered every male that was born to be thrown into the Nile, in order to ſtop the multiplication of the deſcendants of Jacob.

One of the Hebrew women, in this dilemma, preſerved her infant ſon, by expoſing

him on the bank of the river, where ſhe knew the king's daughter uſually bathed. This had the intended effect, and the babe was reared by order of the Princeſs. The early part of this child's life, who was called Moſes, I ſhall paſs over, and proceed to that period when he became the deliverer of his people.

Moſes was near eighty when it pleaſed God to reveal himſelf to him. He and his brother Aaron were then joined in an embaſſy to Pharaoh, demanding, in the name of the God of Iſrael, that the deſcendants of Jacob ſhould be allowed to depart. To prove the truth of this miſſion, Moſes had the power of turning his rod into a ſerpent; but we find the Magicians of Egypt were able to the ſame. The ſuperiority of God was however fully evinced, by Moſes's ſerpent ſwallowing up the others. From this and innumerable paſſages in Scripture, we know that evil ſpirits do exiſt; though, as the emblem of Moſes's ſerpent denotes, their power will, at the allotted time, be utterly deſtroyed.

Pharaoh moſt obſtinately oppoſed the emancipation of the children of Iſrael, till a variety of calamities had been inflicted on him and his people; and when at length they ſet out with his permiſſion, he ſpeedily repented, purſuing them with all the forces of Egypt. Moſes, who had reached the borders of the red ſea, then divided its waters with his rod, and paſſed in ſafety over that ground, which had been ſo lately covered; but Pharaoh and his hoſt periſhed in the attempt to follow them. This event happened 1493 years prior to the Chriſtian æra, and the deſcendants of Jacob at that time amounted to upwards of 600,000 men, beſides the women and children.

For the inſtitution of the Paſchal Lamb, the miracles wrought in Egypt and in the wilderneſs, and alſo for the laws and regulations of Moſes, I refer you to the Bible at large. Indeed I ſhall be as conciſe as poſſible in that part which is taken from Scripture, becauſe I muſt ſuppoſe you have carefully peruſed thoſe ſacred writings; and that all that is now neceſſary, is to recall to your

mind ſuch facts as will keep up the chain of hiſtory.

Notwithſtanding all the wonders which had been wrought for theſe deſcendants of Abraham, they moſt groſly miſbehaved. It was therefore decreed, that not one of that generation which came out of Egypt, except Joſhua and Caleb, ſhould enter the promiſed land. This was fulfilled in the ſpace of forty years: and Moſes being informed that the time was come when they were to be led againſt the Canaanites, aſſembled them together. He ſet before them all that God had done for them; aſſuring them, that the greateſt bleſſings would be the conſequence of their adhering to the laws which their Creator had given them; and, on the other hand, that the moſt dreadful afflictions would attend their diſobedience. He then appointed Joſhua his ſucceſſor, and expired in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age, and 1453 years before the birth of Chriſt.

I will here make a few obſervations on the Moſaic law. At the time it was given, the

Iſraelites had juſt left a land where Idolatry prevailed, and they were going amongſt nations that were guilty of every kind of wickedneſs. Free will is indiſpenſably neceſſary to either virtue or vice, and they were not yet prepared to take in that true and ſpiritual worſhip which Chriſtianity enjoins. In order, therefore, to preſerve them from the idolatries of their neighbours, whoſe worſhip was made up of forms, the Iſraelites were permitted the uſe of innocent ceremonies, which, without a breach of their free will, led them to the contemplation of the true God; and they were in this way prepared for the more enlightened doctrines of the Meſſiah. We accordingly find, that though the Jews, as a nation, crucified their Saviour, yet multitudes of them were convinced of his being the real Chriſt; and it is to Chriſtians of Jewiſh extraction, that the world is chiefly indebted for the propagation of the Goſpel. A plurality of wives and concubines was alſo allowed, becauſe they were as yet incapable of the pure connexion of one man with one woman, which agrees with what Chriſt after-

wards obſerves as to a bill of divorcement; for he ſays, it was not ſo from the beginning, God's creation being male and female, but Moſes allowed it on account of the hardneſs of their hearts. And this confirms my idea of the Moſaic diſpenſation being a neceſſary forerunner of the purer doctrines of Chriſtianity.

Joſhua, immediately after the death of Moſes, led the Iſraelites againſt the Canaanites, whoſe wickedneſs well merited the fate which awaited them. The greateſt part were quickly ſubdued, and either cut off, or made hewers of wood and drawers of water. Thus was Noah's prophecy fulfilled in the deſcendants of Canaan, the ſon of Ham.—*Curſed be Canaan; a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren.*

Whilſt they were in the wilderneſs, Moſes had divided the Iſraelites into twelve tribes, beſides the deſcendants of Levi. The Levites were ſet apart for the ſervice of the Ark, which was a moveable houſe of worſhip. Joſeph's two ſons, Ephraim and Manaſſeh, gave their names to two tribes formed

of their poſterity; and the other ten tribes were ſprung from, and called after, the reſt of the ſons of Jacob. The conquered lands, and thoſe that were deſtined for conqueſt, were therefore divided into twelve parts, each tribe getting one by allotment; and the Levites had certain cities ſet off for them, together with a fixed proportion of the wealth of the others.

Joſhua in his conqueſts confined himſelf to the deſcendants of Ham; for the Edomites, who were ſprung from Eſau; the Midianites, who were derived from Midian, the fourth ſon of Abraham, by his ſecond wife Keturah; and the Moabites and Ammonites, who were deſcended from Lot, remained unmoleſted.

When Joſhua died, the Zidonians and Hivites, who were the remnant of the Canaanites, and the five Lords of the Philiſtines, who were deſcended from Caſluhim and Caphtorim, the ſons of Ham, were unconquered. Inſtead of attacking them, as they had been ordered, the Iſraelites entered into various connexions with them, and be-

came the partakers of all their vices and idolatries. Cuſhan Riſhhathain, King of Meſopotamia, was therefore allowed to ſubdue this choſen people; but, on their repentance, Othniel was permitted to reſcue his countrymen, and he afterwards judged them forty years.

Freſh diſobedience occaſioned a new chaſtiſement, and Eglon, King of Moab, held them in ſlavery for eighteen years; after which Ehud became their deliverer. In a ſhort time they ſinned again, when Jabin, a Prince of the remaining Canaanites, ſubjected them for twenty years; and then Deborah, a Propheteſs, together with Barak, a righteous Iſraelite, reſtored them to liberty.

Tranſgreſſing again, the Midianites enſlaved them for ſeven years, when Gideon redeemed them, and judged Iſrael during his life. On his death, Abimelech, one of his ſons, aſpiring to be King, ſacrificed ſeventy of his brethren; but he himſelf ſoon after fell by the ſword, and Tola and Jair became ſucceſſively the judges of Iſrael.

The crimes of the Iſraelites were next puniſhed by the Philiſtines and Ammonites, from whom Jephtha reſcued them. He then judged Iſrael, and was ſucceeded in that office by Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. On the death of the laſt, this wavering people became as culpable as ever, when the Philiſtines overcame them, holding them in a miſerable ſubjection for forty years; and it was during this period that Sampſon, by his miraculous ſtrength, brought ſo many calamities on theſe conquerors of the Iſraelites.

Thus the poſterity of Jacob conſtantly forſook their God when they enjoyed a ſtate of proſperity; but as often as they were afflicted, they repented and were forgiven. From this you will perceive the dangers that attend a proſperous fortune, and the uſefulneſs of adverſity: therefore, let not the firſt miſlead, nor the latter depreſs you. In the eye of Wiſdom there is but one real and valuable diſtinction amongſt men, and that diſtinction is in the power of all; for it belongs to him that diſcharges the duties of his ſituation, be that ſituation what it may.

Whilſt the Iſraelites were under the yoke of the Philiſtines, they were judged by Eli, and then by Samuel; but on the latter's growing old, he truſted many things to his ſons, who are deſcribed as very unworthy of his confidence. From this cauſe, and from all the ſurrounding nations having kings, the Iſraelites longed for a ſimilar government; and God permitted them to elect Saul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, to that office. This was 1069 years before Chriſt, and 386 years after Joſhua led the Iſraelites out of the wilderneſs.

FOURTH LETTER.

SAUL, on his acceſſion to the throne, found his kingdom, not only in ſubjection, but deſtitute of arms: His ſubjects were alſo deprived of the means of fabricating them, for the Philiſtines had removed their Smiths in order to prevent it. The race of Jacob were however ſufficiently puniſhed, and God was pleaſed to inſpire Jonathan, the ſon of

Saul, with a purpoſe that ſhould ſupply their wants; for he and his armour-bearer attacked a number of the enemy, who either fled or were ſlain, and their arms, thus miraculouſly obtained, were of the greateſt conſequence to the Iſraelites.

Soon after this, Saul himſelf was extremely ſucceſsful againſt the Amalekites, who had invaded his dominions. He made himſelf maſter of their arms, and was thereby enabled to reſcue his country from the Philiſtines. The Amalekites were deſcended from Amalek, who was the illegitimate ſon of Eſau.

But Saul, unequal to proſperity, ceaſed to walk uprightly before his God. It was therefore decreed, that the crown ſhould depart from him, and be transferred to David, the ſon of Jeſſe. David was at this time only the keeper of his father's ſheep; but being remarkable for his ſkill on the harp, he was introduced into the houſe of Saul. Soon afterwards he accepted the challenge of Goliah, a Philiſtine of enormous ſtature, and with a ſtone and a ſling he ſlew his gigantic anta-

goniſt; on which the army of the Philiſtines fled, and were purſued by David and the Iſraelites with a prodigious ſlaughter.

For this ſervice David obtained a daughter of Saul, being thereby raiſed to the higheſt ſtation of a ſubject. The praiſes which were beſtowed on him, were however extremely offenſive to the King, and he devoted his ſon-in-law to deſtruction. But Jonathan, the ſon of Saul, having contracted the ſtrongeſt friendſhip for David, forewarned him of his danger, and enabled him to avert it.

Saul perceiving his intentions were diſcovered, purſued David to a remote part of the country, whither he and his followers had retired. In this expedition David had the nobleſt opportunity of diſplaying the virtues of his heart: he ſurpriſed Saul in a cave when aſleep, and though preſſed by his companions to rid himſelf of ſo dangerous an enemy, he not only refuſed, but left the King unmoleſted. He however cut off the ſkirt of his coat, and when Saul awaked, David ſhewed it to him, as a proof of his generous

forbearance. This for the preſent had a proper effect on the monarch, who burſt into tears, and returned to his capital.

But ſuch ſenſations were not of long continuance, and he again ſet out in purſuit of his ſon-in-law. David with a few followers now reached the tent of Saul by night, where he found him and his attendants aſleep; but though he was ſtrongly ſolicited to deſtroy this purſuer of his life, David peremptorily refuſed it, only carrying away the ſpear and the cruiſe that were beſide the King. Theſe being deſcried in the morning from a neighbouring hill, Saul was touched with this freſh inſtance of generoſity, and again retired with his army.

David however found it neceſſary to keep at a diſtance from Saul; and when the Philiſtines afterwards invaded the dominions of the Iſraelites, he was ſo circumſtanced, that he took no part in that buſineſs; but a body of Amalekites having plundered his country, he defeated them, and recovered the ſpoil. Much about the ſame time Saul re-

ceived a dreadful overthrow from the Philiſtines, his ſons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Melchiſhua, being amongſt the ſlain: and the unfortunate monarch, unable to bear up againſt ſuch complicated misfortunes, put a voluntary end to his life.

This event produced a ſchiſm amongſt the twelve tribes; for thoſe of Judah and Benjamin made David their King, whilſt the other ten acknowledged the juriſdiction of Iſhboſheth, a ſon of Saul. Several wars between theſe two ſtates were the conſequence; but at length Iſhboſheth being ſlain by two of his own ſubjects, the whole houſe of Iſrael ſubmitted to the ſceptre of David.

David being thus a powerful monarch, extended his conqueſts over all the neighbouring countries. The Moabites and Philiſtines were vanquiſhed, and Syria received his garriſons. The Edomites alſo ſubmitted; thereby fulfilling the prophecy of Iſaac, which foretold, that the deſcendants of Eſau ſhould become ſubject to the poſterity of Jacob. Several other nations were likewiſe ſubdued;

and the juriſdiction of David was acknowledged from the Euphrates to the Nile.

Nor were the arts of peace neglected by this victorious Prince. He navigated the red ſea, by employing Tyrian and Zidonian mariners; and by his juſtice and wiſdom he rendered his people proſperous and happy. Having diſcovered a ſurviving ſon of Saul, whoſe name was Mephiboſheth, inſtead of liſtening to any fears as to the crown, he lodged him in his own palace, treating him with the moſt diſtinguiſhed marks of kindneſs and reſpect. He had alſo moſt religiouſly attended to the Moſaic law, nor had the ſmalleſt degree of Idolatry been ſuffered throughout Judea. Thus he in every thing proclaimed himſelf worthy of that ſtation to which he had been ſo unexpectedly exalted. But man—frail man—is incapable of abſolute perfection; and we muſt behold, even David, in the commiſſion of a great and dreadful crime.

During a revolt of the Ammonites, it was the misfortune of David to behold the fair Bethſheba. She was the wife of Uriah, who

was an officer in the army, at this time beſieging Rabbah, the capital of the enemy. Kings but ſeldom ſue in vain, and Bethſhebah yielded to his embraces. She ſoon after proved with child, and as it could not even have the appearance of being Uriah's if he remained abſent, David recalled him to Jeruſalem. Uriah, however, on his return, went not to his own houſe, but remained in the palace. I think it is probable that he was acquainted with his ſhame, though he only alleged that any enjoyment would be criminal, whilſt the army of which he was one, and in which the Ark of God was placed, remained before an enemy. David being thus diſappointed, ſent him back with a letter to Joab, who commanded theſe forces, deſiring he might put Uriah in the front of the battle, and leave him to be deſtroyed by the Ammonites. Joab heſitated not, but becoming the ready inſtrument of villany, the unhappy Uriah fell a victim to his enemies.

Here, then my ſon, contemplate and tremble at the infirmities of thy nature.

David had ſpent his youth in the practice of every virtue, and yet in his riper years he was led into this dreadful crime. No doubt, when the beauties of Bethſheba firſt inflamed his paſſions, nothing was further from his heart than the murder of Uriah. But who can ſay, when he deviates from virtue, where will be the boundary of his criminality? When by Uriah's declining to cohabit with his wife, her detection became next to inevitable, David was led to conſider of more guilty means of averting her ſhame; and perhaps he alſo thought of ſecuring himſelf from the vengeance of an injured huſband.

I have thus, in the ſtrongeſt colours, painted and explained the ſtages of his guilt, becauſe you will often hear the ſcoff of unbelievers on this part of Scripture. David is diſtinguiſhed by the name of Holy, and he is alſo deſcribed as a man after God's own heart. From him likewiſe has ſprung the ſacred ſeed that brings ſalvation to mankind. Strange indeed would it be, if he was not among the beſt of the human race; but we

muſt take his whole life, in order to form a true judgment of it; for where is the mere man that ever lived, whoſe vices would not make him odious, if conſidered without his virtues? I ſhall, therefore, after I have given you the reſt of David's hiſtory, fairly ſtate to you his character.

At the time of Uriah's death, Nathan was God's prophet amongſt the Iſraelites. He therefore viſited David, under the pretence of demanding juſtice on one of his ſubjects, and in this manner he led the monarch to pronounce his own condemnation.

Nathan told him, that in one of his cities two men dwelt, the one rich, and poſſeſſed of many flocks, the other poor, and who had only one ewe lamb, which he had brought up together with him and his children, and which eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his boſom, and was to him as a daughter: And then Nathan added, that the rich man wanting to make a feaſt, inſtead of taking one of his own numerous flock, took and killed the poor man's lamb. David, ſtruck with deteſtation of the rich

man's conduct, inſtantly declared, that he ſhould die. But what muſt have been his feelings, when Nathan ſaid unto him—Thou art the man!

Who but would join with David in the deteſtation of ſuch a man as Nathan had deſcribed? Yet how much more dreadful is the injury of robbbing your neighbour of the wife of his boſom? Guard then againſt gallantry, however faſhionable it may be, as the moſt baneful deſtroyer of human felicity. Fix your affections upon one, and by an inviolable fidelity give, and thereby receive happineſs; but never let it be ſaid that thou art the man who haſt deſtroyed the happineſs of any fellow-creature.

On Nathan's application of his ſtory, David felt and acknowledged his guilt; and as he merited, ſo he expected inſtant death. But great as was his offence, the ſincerity of his repentance procured him longer life. It was however, as Nathan foretold him, to be a life of affliction. Accordingly the child of his iniquity was born with diſeaſe, and died.

Tamar, one of his daughters, was raviſhed by his ſon Ammon; and Abſalom, another of his ſons, ſlew Ammon in revenge. Though Abſalom was pardoned, yet he rebelled againſt his father,—drove him from Jeruſalem,—and ſlept with his concubines. In the war that enſued, Abſalom periſhed by the hands of Joab, and the father, unable to conquer his parental feelings, experienced the ſevereſt ſorrow. Sheba, one of David's ſubjects, likewiſe rebelled againſt him. And in David's laſt days, Adonijah, one of his children, attempted to defeat the ſucceſſion of Solomon, another of his ſons; on which he had the latter crowned, and died in the midſt of this family diſſention.

Before I proceed to ſum up his character, it will not be amiſs to obſerve, that he adviſed Solomon to put Shimei and Joab to death. The latter was a very wicked man, and was openly eſpouſing the cauſe of Adonijah. The former was a profeſſed enemy to David and his houſe; and the only motive that David could have had, was the ſecurity of his ſucceſſor. Had revenge or blood been his object, it had

long been in his own power: and though this is made a charge againſt David, I am perſuaded, when the whole account is fairly conſidered, it will bear no other complexion, than that of a father anxious for the ſafety of his ſon: And Solomon, as poſſeſſing abſolute power, had the right of puniſhing all who deſerved it.

Take then the life of David altogether, and it will be found one of the moſt amiable in hiſtory. His ſparing Saul twice, when his own ſafety was at ſtake, is perhaps unparalleled. His treatment of Saul's ſurviving ſon was noble and generous. His ſorrow for the worthleſs Abſalom, parental and forgiving. His juſtice in governing his people was eminently conſpicuous: And in thoſe times of Idolatry, he was conſtant in the worſhip of the true God. In the affair of Uriah, he was indeed guilty of a moſt enormous crime; but it was contrary to the whole tenor of his life. He was drawn into it by the ſtrongeſt and moſt bewitching of human propenſities; and his repentance was ſincere and perma-

nent. The heavy afflictions he thus brought upon himſelf, he bore with the greateſt reſignation; and in the midſt of them, he ſang the praiſes and the juſtice of his God. Let then any unprejudiced man contemplate the whole of David's character, and when he has fairly weighed his virtues and contrition, againſt this ſingle crime, let him point out, if he can, who amongſt men has better deſerved the appellation of Holy.

FIFTH LETTER.

DAVID died 1019 years before the Chriſtian æra, and I ſhall now examine the relative ſtate of other nations. The Egyptians, who were deſcended from Mizraim, the ſon of Ham, had alone attained to any degree of power. We find them a conſiderable people even ſo early as the days of Jacob the Patriarch; but they were groſs idolators, a calf being the principal object of their worſhip. Their dreadful deſtruction in the red ſea has been already related; and I ſhall only

add of thoſe times, that Pharaoh was the general name of all their kings.

On Joſhua's invading the promiſed land, a number of the Canaanites fled from his arms. To theſe wanderers Egypt afforded a moſt inviting proſpect, as well from the fertility of its ſoil, as from the eaſe with which it might be ſubdued. It was but a little more than forty years from the fatal cataſtrophe of the red ſea, and the Egyptians were but juſt beginning to recover from that misfortune. Inſtead of oppoſing, they therefore relinquiſhed their country to theſe invaders, and proceeding higher up the Nile, they laid the foundation of the kingdom of Upper Egypt.

The original Egyptians were ſuſtained by the fruits of the earth; neither feeding on animal food, nor ſacrificing it to their deities. The common ſuſtenance of the Canaanites was fleſh meat, and they offered not only animals, but men to their idols. Thus different in their manners, no blenditure ever took place between them: and as the new inhabitants of Egypt were remarkable

for their numerous flocks, they were, by way of diſtinction, called the Shepherds.

The Egyptians of Upper Egypt were ſoon divided into ſeveral petty ſtates. Each of theſe had its king, and in this manner about 328 years are ſaid to have elapſed from their expulſion by the ſhepherds. Towards the year 1125, Mephres, who ruled over one of theſe ſmall nations, found means to ſubdue the reſt, uniting all into one kingdom. His reign is alſo memorable for the firſt Egyptian obeliſk, formed out of a marble, which was found near Syene, in the diſtrict of Thebais.

Miſphragmuthoſis ſucceeded Mephres. Being firmly eſtabliſhed in the extenſive territories of Upper Egypt, he determined to revenge the ancient Egyptians on the poſterity of the Canaanites. The ſhepherds were unable to withſtand him, and flying into other countries, almoſt the whole of Lower Egypt was reſtored to the deſcendants of its former owners. The city and diſtrict of Abaris, afterwards Peluſium, however, ſtill held out,

and in it a remnant of the Canaanites were ſtrongly fortified.

The total expulſion of the ſhepherds was completed by Amoſis. His reign is ſtill more memorable for the introduction of aſtronomy, navigation, and letters. Of all people the Edomites were firſt acquainted with theſe uſeful branches of knowledge. When David, King of Iſrael, invaded their country, numbers of them fled into Egypt, where they were moſt hoſpitably received. This was about the twenty-ſecond year of Amoſis's reign; and the Egyptians were amply rewarded by thoſe arts which accompanied the deſcendants of Eſau.

Coptos had hitherto been the ſeat of government, but on Ammon's aſcending the throne, about the year 1034, it was changed to Thebais. By means of the Edomites, the Egyptians had began to navigate the Red and Mediterranean ſeas; but as oars alone were in uſe, their voyages had been extremely confined. The art of making linen cloth was however at this time brought to conſiderable perfection, and the invention of ſails was in-

troduced. This gave the Egyptians a decided ſuperiority, which Ammon did not neglect; for he ſoon after poſſeſſed the moſt reſpectable fleet that had yet appeared in the world. He alſo raiſed a very powerful army, and was thus in every way prepared for the moſt warlike undertakings.

Such was the ſtate of Egypt when Solomon aſcended the throne of Iſrael; and in the next æra of the world, we ſhall ſee events ſuitable to ſo proſperous a ſituation. Of the reſt of Africa, there is nothing yet to be obſerved, but that Ethiopia was peopled by the poſterity of Cuſh, the ſon of Ham: And Lybia is alſo ſuppoſed to owe its firſt inhabitants to the ſame branch of Noah's family.

It is neceſſary to mention, that great diſputes have ariſen as to the country really meant by the ancient Ethiopia. Some authors imagine it was Arabia Felix, or that country in which the preſent Baſſora is ſituated; but my opinion is, that it was the ſame with the modern Ethiopia, though probably of much leſs extent. There are too circumſtances that make me pretty confident of this

being the truth: the one is, that we find hereafter very powerful Ethiopian Princes, who make themſelves maſters of Egypt, which would ill agree with the ſmall territory of Arabia Felix; the other circumſtance is, that all the Aſiatic Princes, who conquered Ethiopia, are deſcribed as firſt entering Egypt, which would not have been neceſſary had the ancient Ethiopia been the ſame with any part of Arabia.

In Aſia, the kingdoms of Babylon and Aſſyria may with truth claim a very high degree of antiquity. Nimrod, the ſon of Cuſh, remained in the plains of Shinaar after the diſperſion; and Babylon was the name of the firſt city or village which he founded. Aſhur, the ſon of Shem, alſo built Nineveh, and the diſtrict which ſurrounded it, was from him called Aſſyria.

No doubt, as the deſcendants of Aſhur and Nimrod increaſed, they ſeparated into as many petty ſtates as there were heads of families. This was the caſe of the Canaanites and Egyptians, and you will find it the ſame in other nations. As to the knowledge or

improvements of the Babylonians and Aſſyrians, at this early period, there is nothing certain; but they were probably near, if not equal, to the Egyptians; for ſome of the Edomites are ſuppoſed to have ſettled there alſo, when they fled from the victorious David.

Syria or Sobah was founded by Aram, the ſon of Shem. Hadad-Ezer was its chief King when David ſubdued it; and Rezon, one of Hadad's captains, afterwards erected a ſmall territory at Damaſcus. Zidonia owed its origin to Zidon, the ſon of Canaan. Theſe people eſcaped the ſword of Joſhua, continuing without any material change till the times of David. In his reign, ſome of the Edomites took ſhelter with the Philiſtines, and aided by them, poſſeſſed themſelves of the city of Zidon. On this a body of Zidonians erected a new city, called Tyre, over which Hiram was King, when Solomon ſucceeded to his father's throne. The territories belonging to Tyre and Zidon were from henceforth known by the name of Phœnicia; that being the appellation given them

by the Edomites: And it was much about this time that Europa, the daughter of Agenor, King of Zidon, was carried off by Aſterius, King of Crete; ſoon after which Cadmus, the brother of Europa, ſettled in Greece.

The two Phrygias, Myſia, Lycia, Cilicia, Media, Scythia, Iberia, Pontus, and Cappadocia, were firſt peopled by the ſons of Japhet. Mæonia or Lydia, Perſia, Arabia, and all the eaſtern parts of Aſia, were from Shem; and Noah himſelf is ſuppoſed to have ſettled the two Armenias: But every thing relative to theſe countries, prior to the name of Solomon, is buried in obſcurity.

Europe was certainly unpeopled for a conſiderable time after the diſperſion of mankind; and from its vicinity to Aſia-Minor, there can be little doubt but its firſt inhabitants were from the poſterity of Japhet. Greece, in particular, is ſuppoſed to owe its firſt ſettlement to Javan and Eliſha, two of Japhet's ſons; but be that as it may, there was no ſtate of any conſequence, nor any degree of civilization in that quarter, till after the expulſion of the ſhepherds from Egypt.

It took place about 1100 years before Chriſt, and many of them ſettled in Greece and the neighbouring iſlands. Inachus, Lelex, and Pelaſgus, three of their greateſt leaders, fixed themſelves in Peloponneſus. Thoſe kingdoms, which were afterwards called Sicyon and Argos, were founded by Inachus, who left the firſt to his ſon Ægialeus, and the laſt to another ſon, named Phoroneus. Lelex began the famous kingdom of Lacedæmon, or Sparta; Pelaſgus gave an origin to Arcadia, and theſe were the firſt ſtates we read of in that Peninſula. The next was Meſſene, which aroſe from Polycaon, the ſon of Lelex. In the year 1035, or thereabouts, Æthlius, the grand-ſon of Deucalion, King of Theſſaly, gave a commencement to Elis: and Achaia, originally a part of Sicyon, was ſome time after this made a diſtinct ſtate, by a King whoſe name was Eumelus.

When the ſhepherds firſt entered Peloponneſus, Ogyges was the leader of the Aborigines on the continental part of Greece; and during his reign, a great flood happened in that part of the world, which has been

ſince diſtinguiſhed by his name. He tranſmitted his territories to his ſon Eleuſis, who raiſed a city called Eleuſis; but he was not able to prevent an Egyptian, whoſe name was Cecrops, from ſettling in his neighbourhood, and his town was denominated Cecropia. Hæmon, the ſon of Pelaſgus, became, about the ſame time, King of Theſſaly. This new kingdom was afflicted with a great flood about the year 1045, and Deucalion, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Hæmon, together with his family, thereupon took ſhelter in the city of Cecropia. It was about this period that Cadmus, with a body of Phœnicians, or Zidonians, ſettled in that part which was afterwards named Thebes and Bœotia: and this is the beſt account we have of the beginning of theſe Grecian kingdoms.

Of the iſlands, Crete alone is worthy of notice. It was probably firſt peopled from the ſame ſtock that emigrated from Aſia-Minor into Greece; but the earlieſt ſettlement of any moment was made by Teutamus, about the year 1060, or 1070. He was the leader of a body of Pelaſgians from Ar-

cadia; and having made good an eſtabliſhment, he tranſmitted it to his ſon Aſterius. This monarch is ſaid to have carried off Europa, the daughter of Agenor, King of Zidonia; and it is added, that her brother Cadmus was ſent in purſuit of them; but not ſucceeding, he choſe rather to ſettle in Greece than return to his father. However, all that is certain is, that Europa became the Queen of Aſterius, and Cadmus did lay the foundation of a kingdom, as before related.

Greece and its iſlands received a great degree of knowledge by the arrival of the Egyptian ſhepherds. Before that time the original inhabitants were nearly in a ſtate of nature, being deſtitute of all the arts and conveniencies of life. But, though the ſhepherds introduced many uſeful inventions, it was Cadmus and Europa, with their followers, that brought the moſt material improvements. They were acquainted with the uſe of gold, ſilver, and braſs, which they converted into different inſtruments. Nor were they long arrived, till the art of extracting and uſing iron was diſcovered by this inge-

nious people. But above all, the introduction of letters into Europe is univerſally given to Cadmus; and from thence a rapid improvement took place in this hitherto uncivilized quarter.

Of Italy, all that deſerves attention is, that Œnotrus, the ſon of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, led a colony there about the year 1028, ſettling near the Tiber. He is ſaid to have diſpoſſeſſed a people called the Siculi, who thereupon fled to the iſland from them named Sicily: And Œnotrus, from the arts introduced by him into this hitherto ſavage country, was afterwards deified by the name of Janus. Of the other parts of Europe in the year 1019, not even a trace is to be found; and in my next epiſtle, I ſhall give you a few obſervations on the ſtate of the world, when Solomon aſcended the throne of Iſrael.

SIXTH LETTER.

AT the acceſſion of Solomon, the Iſraelites were certainly more powerful than any ſtate that had yet appeared upon the earth; but as this is not commonly received, I ſhall give you ſome reaſons that confirm my opinion.

When Abraham firſt went into the promiſed land, we know to a certainty that it was not entirely inhabited; for Lot's herdſmen quarrelling with his uncle Abraham's, Lot had his choice to what hand he ſhould remove; which could not have been the caſe, had that country been fully occupied. There is another ſtriking proof of the humility of ſtates at that period. Four Kings had conquered five, and plundered Sodom of what it contained. In it Lot at that time dwelt, and Abraham hearing of his nephew's misfortunes, purſued the victorious kings with no greater force than 318 of his own ſervants; and yet this handful of men was adequate to the object, for he proved ſucceſsful and re-

covered the ſpoil. Now the promiſed land was only a few hundred miles from the plains of Shinaar; and we may fairly ſuppoſe, no high degree of population had then taken place even in the countries neareſt to that wherein the diſperſion happened.

Great diſputes have ariſen as to the time which elapſed between the flood and the call of Abraham; but there is no doubt, that 430 years was the exact period from the laſt event to the deliverance of the Iſraelites. It is admitted, that Abraham was called 1923 years before the Chriſtian æra. The deſtruction of Pharoah and his hoſt in the red ſea, was conſequently in the year 1493. Now, before that dreadful cataſtrophe, Egypt was more powerful than any other nation upon earth; but ſhe was only powerful by compariſon, as I ſhall preſently ſhew.

It may not be unneceſſary to enlarge a little on the ſuperiority of Egypt, before the deliverance of Iſrael. There were many countries much nearer to the diſperſion; and it may naturally be aſked, why ſhould this nation be greater than them? The anſwer is

however plain and ſatisfactory. Egypt was, of all parts of the earth, the beſt calculated for producing corn. When the Nile retired within its banks, which it uniformly did, after having overflowed the low land for a great part of the year, the ſlime that was left was ready to receive the ſeed; and without either expence or trouble, the moſt fruitful crops were ſure to ſucceed. In other countries, manure was to be found out, and the arts of tillage were to be invented. It naturally followed, that the inhabitants chiefly lived by their herds and flocks, and on the fruits of the earth. But this mode of life cannot admit of a cloſe and numerous ſociety, which is the attendant of agriculture alone. This is the reaſon why Egypt, though remote from the plains of Shinaar, was the firſt ſtate during the captivity of Iſrael; and with this agree the beſt accounts of the world.

I ſhall now endeavour to aſcertain the ſtrength of Egypt in the year 1493. We know from Scripture, that only 600,000 Iſraelites were at that time fit to bear arms; and yet they appeared ſo formidable to the

Egyptians, that their male children were put to death for a conſiderable time before that period. Now many inſtances ariſe in hiſtory, of multitudes of ſlaves being kept in ſubjection by a few, who have arms and excluſive power. It might therefore be argued, with great probability, that the Egyptians were inferior in population to the poſterity of Jacob; or elſe they would not have deprived themſelves of ſo many ſlaves, who would have been ſubſervient to their intereſts. But I will ſuppoſe them equal, or even ſuperior in number to the Iſraelites; and in that caſe, the moment Pharaoh and his hoſt were deſtroyed, the houſe of Jacob became a greater and more riſing people than the remnant of the Egyptians.

We find the Iſraelites, from this period, ſometimes puniſhed and ſometimes proſperous; but they never were a powerful people till after the acceſſion of David. The progreſs of Egypt, according to Sir Iſaac Newton's plan, is exactly conformable. By the cataſtrophe of the red ſea, the Iſraelites

gained the aſcendency, and kept it till after the reign of Solomon: but in the times of David, Egypt was riſing faſt to power under its monarch, Ammon. In my next æra, you will alſo find Seſoſtris, ſubjecting ſeveral countries during the reign of Solomon; and when Judea had paſſed its ſummit, and was weakened by the ſchiſm between the ten tribes of Iſrael, and thoſe of Judah and Benjamin, the ſame conqueror found no difficulty in taking Jeruſalem, and in purſuing his Aſiatic expedition. This agrees with both reaſon and Scripture: But had the Egyptians, as many allege, been ſooner raiſed to empire, it would have been actually contrary to the natural progreſs of theſe two ſtates, after the deliverance of the children of Iſrael.

The only empires that are even ſuppoſed to have exiſted before that of David, are thoſe of Egypt, Aſſyria, and Babylon. Having diſcuſſed the queſtion as to the firſt, let us now inquire about the exiſtence of the latter. The firſt great monarch of the two laſt countries, according to Scripture, was

Pul, who began his reign in the year 790 before Chriſt. That no great nation exiſted there in the days of David, is certain; becauſe his conqueſts reached to the Euphrates. After the reign of Solomon, Seſac, or Seſoſtris, not only extended his arms as far as David had done, but actually ſubjected Aſſyria and Babylon. It is therefore clear, that there was no great Aſſyrian or Babyloniſh kingdom, from the acceſſion of David to the times of Pul. But according to Cteſias of Cnidus, who wrote between three and four hundred years prior to the birth of Chriſt, there was a great empire in this part long before the days of Abraham. His Ninus muſt indeed have been very near, if not actually the ſucceſſor of Nimrod or Aſhur; and though the diſperſion in the plains of Shinaar ſo lately happened, Ninus is repreſented as at the head of millions. All Aſia and Egypt are ſaid to have been ſubjected by him. Semiramis, his queen and ſucceſſor, according to the ſame author, rendered Ethiopia and Lybia, alſo tributary; and ſhe is like-

wiſe ſaid to have employed two millions of people in building immenſe walls round Babylon, beſides a number of other extravagancies.

You have aleady ſeen from Scripture, the ſlender ſtate of population in the times of Abraham. What then muſt have been the ſituation of the earth, as to its inhabitants, in one century after the diſperſion? The whole human race were aſſembled in the plains of Shinaar, when that event took place; and from this and other circumſtances, we may ſafely ſay, there were not as many men upon the earth at the time Cteſias introduces Semiramis, as he gives that Queen to build her walls of Babylon. Beſides, no great kingdom ever was deſtroyed but by means of ſome other nation: And were it even poſſible that a Babyloniſh or Aſſyrian empire, could have exiſted before the days of David; where was the ſtate that did or could deſtroy it?

But the fact is, that Cteſias wrote, either from the invention of his own brain, or from vague accounts unworthy of his notice. He was himſelf a Greek, and except being phy-

ſician to Cyrus, the brother of Artaxerxes Mnemon, he had no opportunity of knowing the real hiſtory of thoſe affairs; and it is now agreed, that he was even unacquainted with the true accounts of the times ſubſequent to Pul. All the kings he mentions, inſtead of having any affinity to Babyloniſh or Aſſyrian names, are of Egyptian, Perſian, or Grecian origin. The things he relates as having ſeen, are alſo ſtamped with ſelf-evident falſehood. Ariſtotle, who lived a little more than a century after him, declares he is unworthy of credit; and yet he is the only authority for an Aſſyrian or Babyloniſh empire, before the days of David.

Sir Iſaac Newton reconciles the reign of Ninus and Semiramis, with the real hiſtory of thoſe countries, by ſuppoſing they were different names for Nabonaſſar and his queen. Nabonaſſar was the ſon of Pul, and his acts with thoſe of his Princeſs, you will hereafter ſee do accord with ſome of thoſe deſcribed by Cteſias; and Herodotus on one occaſion ſays, that Semiramis lived only five genera-

tions before Nitocris, who was mother to the laſt King of Babylon; which ſtrongly corroborates Sir Iſaac's conjecture. But be that as it may, I truſt I have proved, that no great empire ever aroſe in Aſia, prior to the reign of Solomon.

Let us now attend to the ſtate of the world in the year 1019. Of the fine arts and ſciences, but little was known in theſe early times. Letters, aſtronomy, and navigation were in their infancy. Other branches were ſcarcely begun; and iron, the moſt uſeful of all metals, was but a few years diſcovered.

The religion of the world was idolatrous, the Iſraelites alone excepted; but the particular idols and forms of worſhip, are ſcarcely named; and it was not for a conſiderable time afterwards, that the heathen mythology was reduced into any kind of order.

It may not be amiſs here to obſerve, that before the deluge, the common age of man was from 8 to 900 years. After the flood it

was only 4 or 500 years; but as population increaſed, we find it gradually diminiſh, till at length in the days of David, ſeventy or eighty years was conſidered as the ſtandard of longevity.

The few nations which had riſen to any degree of conſequence in the year 1019, and the ignorance which then prevailed, is a ſelf-evident proof of the ſmall ſpace which had elapſed from the laſt peopling of the earth; for, as every particular nation has at one time or other, been in a ſtate of nature, ſo was it with the world at large. At this early period little was known, but every ſucceeding age added ſome degree of knowledge; and even at this day, we find new diſcoveries that are likely to be ſerviceable to mankind. There is, however, one material diſtinction in this compariſon: it is, that particular ſtates have in ſucceſſion roſe to greatneſs, and gone into decay; whereas the world, though with ſome interruptions, has as yet been only progreſſive in improvement. It too will attain its ſummit; but before it does, we are to look for

the moſt important of all events: what that event is, will more properly come in elſewhere; and I ſhall therefore, for the preſent, withhold my thoughts on futurity.

SECOND ÆRA

OF

Univerſal Hiſtory.

Commencing in the Year 1019, *and ending in the Year* 790, *before the Chriſtian Æra.*

FIRST LETTER.

SOLOMON having aſcended the throne of Iſrael, was obliged, for his own ſecurity, to put Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei to death; after which he entered into the peaceful poſſeſſion of all his father's dominions.

As yet the ark was the only place of worſhip; but Solomon now reſolved to raiſe a magnificent temple to the God of Iſrael, and

Jeruſalem was fixed on for the ſeat of this ſacred edifice.

This building was begun in the fourth, and finiſhed in the eleventh year of his reign. The materials of which it was compoſed, were ſo exactly fitted and prepared, that no hammer or tool of iron was uſed in putting them together; and when the ſtructure was compleated, it became the admiration of all who beheld it. Solomon alſo erected a magnificent palace for himſelf, and otherwiſe highly ornamented and improved his kingdom. Indeed, his wiſdom was every where celebrated, and his writings are at this day remarkable for their invention and elegance, as well as for the juſtice of their obſervations.

But even in Solomon, we are again to find the frailty of human nature. According to the cuſtom of thoſe times, he had a multitude of wives, ſome of whom were idolators. In his old age, they were able to pervert him from the true worſhip; and the reſt of the Iſraelites were but too ready to follow his example.

There cannot be a more marked hiſtory than this of the dangerous power of beauty. To love and to admire the ſofter ſex, is at once the ſtrongeſt propenſity of our nature, and the ſureſt ſource of human happineſs: but then it is happineſs only, when theſe endearing affections are properly beſtowed. Guard then your heart againſt the allurements of vice, and connect yourſelf to virtue.

Solomon reigned forty years, and was ſuc ceeded by his ſon Rehoboam. On the death of Saul, you have ſeen the tribes of Judah and Benjamin forming a diſtinct kingdom, to which they gave the title of Judah; the other ten having retained that of Iſrael. The ſame ſchiſm at this time again took place, and the twelve tribes were never afterwards reunited.

Rehoboam continued to reign over Judah, but Jeroboam, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, was raiſed to the throne of Iſrael. He built the city of Shechem for his capital, and both he and his ſucceſſors had frequent wars with Judah and Syria. In the fifth

year of Rehoboam's reign, Jeruſalem was plundered, and the kingdom of Judah ſubjected by Seſac king of Egypt. But on that conqueror's death, it threw off the Egyptian yoke; and both it and the crown of Iſrael continued independent till after the year 790, the period to which I am now directing your attention.

In the year 1019, Ammon king of Egypt, was poſſeſſed of a powerful fleet and a numerous army. To command them, he had trained up his ſon Seſoſtris, with all the ideas of a conqueror; and to ſecure him officers that might be depended upon, every male child, born on the ſame day, was likewiſe carefully educated with the royal youth; after which they were diſtributed to the moſt important ſtations throughout the forces. Thus prepared, Seſoſtris began his career with ſubduing the Arabians and Troglodytæ, who dwelt on the borders of the red ſea. He alſo viſited different places on the Aſiatic coaſt; and his pillars were found even as far as the mouth of the Ganges.

Lybia and Ethiopia were his next con-

queſts. He then proceeded with the army through Africa, to the Streights of Gibraltar, where the fleet, under the command of his brother Japetus, conveyed them into Spain. On each ſide of this narrow ſea he erected pillars, with an inſcription, that he had reached the extremity of the earth; and as he was the Egyptian Hercules or hero, they were for many centuries called the pillars of Hercules. He then penetrated through France into Italy, from whence he paſſed into Sicily. There he left a body of Spaniards, called the Sicani, with whom he had ſtrengthened his forces, and at length returned to his native country.

About the year 1002, Seſoſtris ſucceeded to the crown of Egypt. He began his reign with deifying his father under the name of Jupiter Ammon. Several temples were erected to him, and in Lybia there was one which became particularly famous for its oracle. Seſoſtris continued many years in eſtabliſhing order in Lybia, Ethiopia, and the adjoining countries; but did not attempt to make any new conqueſts on the Aſiatic ſide,

till the death of Solomon. It is probable, that the united houſe of Iſrael, under a wiſe king, was too powerful to be attacked by him: But when the ſchiſm took place between Judah and Iſrael, they were no longer formidable.

We accordingly find Seſoſtris taking and plundering Jeruſalem in the year 974; for he is the Seſac of Scripture. He then penetrated into Syria, Aſſyria, Babylonia, and all the countries of Aſia Minor. No great nation having yet ariſen in that quarter, he was every where victorious; and to commemorate theſe conqueſts, he in every ſtate had pillars erected, with inſcriptions that Seſoſtris, lord of lords, and king of kings, had conquered that country.

From Aſia-Minor he paſſed into Thrace, where he defeated and killed Lycurgus, its king, beſtowed the vacant crown on Tharops, one of his Egyptian officers. The ſtates of Greece, alarmed at ſuch a neighbour, united their forces under the command of Perſeus; at the ſame time calling a body of Scythians to their aid. In a battle that enſued, Seſoſ-

tris for the firſt time found he was not invincible. He therefore liſtened to terms of peace, which being concluded, the Greeks entertained him with all the honours due to his exalted ſtation.

Whilſt he remained at Argos, he buried Ariadne, the daughter of Minos king of Crete. When ſhe was forſaken by Theſeus (which will come in better elſewhere), ſhe was carried into Egypt, and there became the wife or miſtreſs of Seſoſtris. To him ſhe bore two ſons, whom he left among the Greeks, and they were afterwards in the Argonautic expedition.

Seſoſtris now returned through Aſia-Minor to his own country, at the ſame time leaving ſome of his forces to guard the extremities of his conqueſts. His nephew Prometheus, he left at Mount Caucaſus. Æetes was ſtationed in the kingdom of Colchis; and a body of Lybian females, who had ſerved under him, were fixed on the banks of the river Thermodon. Theſe are ſuppoſed to have been the Amazons of the ancients, though

ſome authors make thoſe heroines of Scythian extraction.

The Egyptian monarch having brought from his conqueſts, not only immenſe riches, but vaſt numbers of captives, immediately ſet about the moſt extenſive and laborious undertakings. To him are aſcribed four obeliſks, each of which was forty cubits in height; but the greateſt of all his works, was his diviſion of Egypt into thirty-ſix parts or nomes, through each of which he made canals that communicated with the Nile. The earth which was dug out of theſe, he alſo applied to a moſt ſalutary purpoſe; for with it he raiſed thoſe places where towns or cities were to be built, thereby ſecuring them from being overflowed. Each nome had a capital, with one or more magnificent temples. At ſtated times in the year, all were to repair to their reſpective chief city; and it was ſo managed, that the diſtribution of juſtice, the buying and ſelling of goods, and the performance of religious duties, ſhould all correſpond to theſe eſtabliſhed periods.

Each temple erected by Seſoſtris, was, in

ſome degree, dedicated to one or other of his principal officers. I ſay, in ſome degree, becauſe Seſoſtris and his queen, were worſhipped in every temple under the names of Oſiris and Iſis. They were the great and univerſal deities of Egypt; but every nome had other deified mortals, who were peculiar to their reſpective diſtricts. The actions of theſe men were then recorded by the figures of ſuch animals and vegetables as were moſt applicable. But in a century or two, theſe Hieroglyphics were conſidered in honour of the animals and vegetables themſelves; and from thence aroſe thoſe ſtrange idolatries which you will find amongſt the ſubſequent Egyptians.

Seſoſtris boaſted that in all theſe immenſe labours, not one native had been employed. But ſurely it was a vain-glorious, and ought to have been a painful, reflection, that he had made ſo many miſerable. His treatment of thoſe unfortunate monarchs, who had fallen into his hands, was ſtill more inexcuſable; for on ſtate days, he even yoked them to his chariot. One of theſe kings looking back

on a wheel with uncommon attention, induced Seſoſtris to aſk the cauſe of it, when he received this moſt ſtriking reply:—The going round of this wheel, O king! recalls to my mind the viciſſitudes of fortunes; for, as every part of the wheel is uppermoſt and lowermoſt by turns, ſo it is with men, who one day ſit on a throne, and on the next are reduced to the vileſt degree of ſlavery.—Theſe obſervations were not thrown away on the haughty Egyptian, and he no longer permitted ſuch an unworthy treatment of the captive Princes.

Nothing has more confounded ancient hiſtory, than the various names by which this hero has been handed down to poſterity. In Egypt, he was moſt generally called Seſoſtris, or Oſiris; in Judea, Seſac, or Sheſac; in Arabia and Greece, Bacchus, which means great; in Chaldea and Aſſyria, Belus, or the Lord; in Thrace and Phrygia, Mavors, or Mars. Sir Iſaac Newton has very fully inveſtigated this ſubject, and to him I refer you if you wiſh for a minuter inquiry.

Orus ſucceeded his father Seſoſtris about

the year 956. He was ſoon engaged in a war with his uncle Japetus, who had the government of Lybia, and thoſe countries which lay between it and the pillars of Hercules. In this conteſt Japetus was ſlain, and deified by the name of Neptune; after which his ſon Atlas was ſuffered to reign over what his father had uſurped, without further moleſtation.

The Ethiopians revolted from Orus about the ninth year of his reign, and electing Zerah for their king, they marched againſt Egypt. Orus was defeated in a battle that followed, and drowned in the Nile. He was then deified by the name of Apollo, and Thoth, who had been ſecretary to him and his father, received a ſimilar honour, by the appellation of Hermes or Mercury. There was, however, according to ſome, an earlier Egyptian Hermes-Triſmegiſtus, celebrated for his knowledge.

Zerah having poſſeſſed himſelf of the vacant throne, ſoon after ſet out to renew the ſubjection of Judea. He did not ſucceed, for Aſa, the king of that country, not only defeated him, but obliged him to retire with the utmoſt precipitation. On this the Lower-

Egypt ſhook off the Ethiopian yoke, calling to their aid a number of the Iſraelites, and remaining Canaanites. Oſorſyphus, an Egyptian prieſt, afterwards called Hercules Ægyptus, was the leader of that revolt, and on its proving ſucceſsful, he was raiſed to the crown of this new kingdom.

This alteration took place about the year 946, and Zerah did not long ſurvive it. Memnon, who was alſo called Amenophis and Oſymandias, ſucceeded him, and began with building and fortifying the city of Memphis, as a barrier againſt Oſorſyphus. For the ſame reaſon he changed the courſe of the Nile, and having cauſed it to run between two mountains, he threw a bridge from the one to the other. He then raiſed and diſciplined a prodigious army, with which he regained the Lower-Egypt; and having forced the Iſraelites and Canaanites, who were ſettled there, to relinquiſh their new poſſeſſions, it was called the ſecond expulſion of the ſhepherds.

The reign of Memnon was remarkable for the great luxury which he introduced and en-

couraged amongſt his ſubjects. This he ſought to carry beyond the grave, for he is generally allowed to have raiſed the firſt pyramids. They were erected in a burying place near Memphis, and were intended for the interment of himſelf and his family. He ſeems however to have been depoſited at Thebais, in a ſuperb ſepulchre, which was called the tomb of Oſymandias. Thoas, king of Cyprus, who was remarkable for his ſkill in metals, and who had ſupplied Egypt with great quantities of arms, died in the reign of Memnon; whereupon the Egyptian monarch deified him by the name of Vulcan, at the ſame time beginning a moſt magnificent temple to his memory.

Rhampſinitus, the next king of Egypt, was extremely avaricious: he, however, raiſed two obeliſks, and added the weſtern portico to the temple of Vulcan. His ſon and ſucceſſor Mæris, built the northern portico, and raiſed an obeliſk forty-eight cubits high. But the work for which he is chiefly celebrated, is the lake Mæris, near Memphis, which was uſed, as occaſion required, to raiſe and lower

the Nile. This was an artificial piece of water, fifteen leagues in circumference; in the midſt of which, were two very large pyramids. Mæris alſo highly improved and ornamented the city of Memphis, which he now made the ſeat of his empire.

Cheops, his ſucceſſor, built a very great pyramid; but behaving ill, he was denied the rights of ſepulture. His brother Cephron next reigned for a few years, to whom another of the pyramids is aſcribed; and at his death, the crown devolved on his ſon Mycerinus. This prince ſpent a ſhort life in riot and diſſipation, during which a pyramid was began, that was finiſhed by his ſiſter and ſucceſſor, Nitocris: And it was towards the cloſe of her reign, that Pul founded the Aſſyrian empire; long before which, the Aſiatic nations had entirely thrown off that yoke which Seſoſtris had impoſed.

Having brought up my account of Egypt to the year 790, I ſhall here give you a conciſe view of its manners and regulations. The early acquirements of the Egyptians, are highly celebrated. Moſes is ſaid to have been

learned in their wiſdom, and Solomon to have excelled it; but let their knowledge in worldly matters have been ever ſo great, their religion was crowded with the groſſeſt abſurdities. It is ſaid indeed, that in one of their temples, there was an inſcription in theſe words: "I am all that has been, is, and ever ſhall be. No mortal has ever raiſed up the veil with which I am covered." In another temple, was alſo an inſcription to Iſis: "To thee who being one, art all things, the Goddeſs Iſis." One might ſuppoſe from theſe inſcriptions, that they had at leaſt ſome juſt notions of the Deity; but when we find them worſhipping deified men and women, and even the vileſt of animals, we can no longer doubt the exceſs of their idolatries.

To attend their ſacred animals, whole families were appointed, and whoever killed one of theſe creatures, though accidentally, was puniſhed with death. They had two bulls who were in particular eſtimation. One of theſe called Apis, reſided at Memphis; and the other, whoſe name was Mnenis, was worſhipped at Heliopolis, in Lower Egypt.

As they reſpectively died, they were ſucceeded by bulls of ſimilar marks, and the deceaſed was interred with the utmoſt magnificence. The ceremony of introducing the new bulls to their reſpective temples, was alſo performed with the greateſt ſolemnity. The moſt noble apartments were prepared, and their prieſts officiated about them with the moſt profound reſpect and attention. The bull Mnenis was the moſt ancient, and no doubt was the ſame with their calf in the days of Moſes. They conceived that the ſoul of their firſt king was in Mnenis, and that of Seſoſtris in Apis; and theſe two ſouls were ſuppoſed to paſs into the new bulls as often as ſuch ſucceſſions took place.

Every temple in Egypt had an independent eſtabliſhment. Thence it happened, that animals who were the greateſt enemies to each other, had in different places their reſpective worſhippers. Each temple had a high prieſt, whoſe office deſcended to his male iſſue. There were likewiſe a number of inferior prieſts in every place of worſhip. All prieſts were obliged to abſtain from fiſh; and both

them and the laity held beans and ſwines fleſh in abhorrence. In order to purify the clergy, they were enjoined to bathe twice in every night, and as often by day. The Egyptians, in their early days, would neither eat nor ſacrifice animals; but this peculiarity was now in both inſtances aboliſhed.

It was a part of their religion never to eat or drink with ſtrangers. Circumciſion was in uſe among them, and at their feaſts of Iſis, both men and women ſcourged themſelves. They believed in the immortality of the ſoul, and that after death, it paſſed for a great number of years through various animals, till at length it re-animated a human frame. By ſome it is ſuppoſed, that the Egyptians conceived it would again enter its own actual body. This will account for the care they took of their mummies—for the great erecting pyramids for ſepulchres—and for the extenſive vaults in which the lower orders were depoſited. The Egyptians therefore ſaid, it was of little conſequence in what place they lived, as their then life was but a

journey, and their houſes inns: but they conſidered their burying-places as more laſting habitations.

The government of Egypt was monarchical from its earlieſt hiſtory. There were fixed regulations for the kings; but the only puniſhment for infringing them, was a denial of interment after death. For this purpoſe, the body of every deceaſed monarch was publicly laid out, and it was lawful for every one to ſpeak freely of his actions. If the people who aſſembled approved of them, he received a magnificent funeral; but if otherwiſe, he could not be interred. This was deemed a heavy puniſhment; for they conceived that burial was indiſpenſably neceſſary for the future happineſs of the ſoul. A ſimilar trial to this was alſo held over the meaneſt Egyptian. It was done by bringing the body to the edge of a piece of water, where one man attended in a boat. If the people of the diſtrict approved of the life of the deceaſed, his remains were put into the veſſel, and conveyed to one of their vaults. If not, they were not interred: and from this, the Charon and

his boat, of the Grecian Mythology, ſeems to derive its origin.

The firſt duty of an Egyptian king when he roſe in the morning, was to inveſtigate all public diſpatches. He next attended public worſhip, where the prieſts delicately pointed out the duties of his ſtation. The reſt of the day had alſo its particular allotments, and even his food and liquors were minutely ſpecified. Leſt he ſhould imbibe any thing improper from his ſervants, none but the children of the clergy were allowed to be near his perſon. You will, however, eaſily ſee the prieſtcraft concealed under this pretence, and that, in fact, all the power of Egypt was thereby veſted in that order.

The crown was hereditary, but whenever the royal line was extinct, it belonged to the prieſts and ſoldiers to elect a new king, to whoſe offspring the ſceptre again deſcended. If ſuch election fell on a ſoldier, he was immediately initiated in the prieſthood; for their kings were always at the head of both civil and religious affairs. The lands of Egypt were divided into three parts: one was to the

king, for the maintenance of his royal dignity; another to the ſoldiers, or ſtanding army of the kingdom; and the third to the prieſts. The king, ſoldiers, and clergy, then let their lands to the ſhepherds, huſbandmen, and artificers.

The ordinary adminiſtration of juſtice was committed to thirty-one men, thus choſen. The cities of Heliopolis, Thebais, and Memphis, ſent ten each, and theſe thirty elected one out of their own number for their preſident; on which the city which had deputed him, added another. Theſe judges had fixed ſalaries, and were ſworn that the king ſhould in no wiſe influence their deciſions.

The mode in which trials were carried on, was by a written accuſation, and the like defence. When judgment was given, he who pronounced it, touched the ſucceſsful party with a figure of Truth, as emblematic of the principle by which their deciſion was directed.

The puniſhment of murder was death, and if it appeared, that any one could have prevented it, he was deemed a principal. Any

perſon having knowledge of a murder, and not diſcovering of it, was ſeverely whipped, and the city neareſt to the place where the crime was committed, was obliged to furniſh a magnificent funeral. Parricides were puniſhed with a death of torture; but where parents killed their children, they were obliged to hold the dead bodies in their arms for three days and nights, without intermiſſion. Pregnant women, when doomed to die, were reſpited till delivered. Mutiny or deſertion from the army, was puniſhed by loſs of land and degradation. A man who betrayed his country's deſigns to an enemy, loſt his tongue. Coining, forgery, and falſe weights, were puniſhed with the loſs of both hands. A rape with the deprivation of the offending part. Adultery in a man, with one thouſand laſhes—in a woman with the loſs of her noſe. Where a debt was claimed without a writing, the oath of the ſuppoſed debtor exonerated him; but perjury in all caſes was puniſhed with death. When a debt was eſtabliſhed, the goods, but not the perſon, became liable.

If a man falſely accuſed another of any thing, he received the puniſhment which he had endeavoured to have inflicted. Men were permitted to borrow money on the embalmed bodies of their anceſtors, but they could not themſelves be interred till the pledge was redeemed; and it was found a very ſufficient ſecurity. A prieſt could marry but one wife, but the laity were allowed a plurality. All children were deemed legitimate, for it was alleged, the woman had nothing more to ſay to them than affording them lodging and nouriſhment. All women were ſuppoſed to be ſuperior to men, and at marriage the men promiſed obedience. Every Egyptian was obliged on pain of death, to give in to the proper officer, a true account of his mode of living. Sharpers and robbers were however ſuffered, on condition of their being regiſtered, and acting under an appointed chief. This leader was accountable for the plunder taken by his followers, and the perſon robbed was ſure of having what he loſt, on paying one fourth of its value. Every man was bound to follow his father's mode of life.

The women took care of all affairs without doors, and the men were employed within. Daughters were obliged to provide for their aged parents, but the ſons were exonerated. It would ſeem that they had no phyſicians, as it was a practice to expoſe the ſick on their roads, for the benefit of having the advice of travellers. Another ſingular cuſtom was, their carrying about the image of a dead body at their feaſts; at the ſame time inviting the gueſts to be merry, as to that they muſt come.

The Egyptians had a great averſion to ſtrangers, and all kind of novelty. They, however, highly improved their own internal knowledge, and were the firſt who brought many branches of ſcience to any degree of perfection. But theſe improvements were chiefly confined to the prieſthood, and were recorded in Hieroglyphics, that were only intelligible to that order; though for common uſe, they had an alphabet that was unſtood by all ranks of people. Geography was introduced by Seſoſtris, cauſing his conqueſts

to be delineated. Geometry and ſurveying began under Mæris, who meaſured out the lands to his ſoldiers, and is ſaid to have wrote a treatiſe on thoſe ſubjects. A knowledge of the heavenly bodies was very early cultivated amongſt them; for in the reign of Memnon, the ſolar year was marked within a few hours and minutes of the utmoſt preciſion. This is aſcertained by a circle long afterwards found in the tomb of that monarch, which was not only divided into 365 parts, but had alſo the reſpective riſings and ſettings of the ſtars engraven upon it.

The greateſt ſource of the wealth and fertility of Egypt, was the Nile. This river riſes in Abyſſinia, and after falling over ſeven great cataracts, it waters the country of Egypt. For ſome months in the year, the lands are entirely overflowed, but it then retires within its banks, and the moſt aſtoniſhing crops are ſure to follow. In the early ages, as there was no apparent cauſe for this annual overflowing, it was deemed miraculous, becauſe no rain is ever ſeen in Egypt. The ſhepherds therefore ſacrificed a male and female child

once in the year, by throwing them into the Nile, in order to ſecure its being propitious; and after their expulſion, the real Egyptians took up this horrid ſuperſtition, though in other inſtances they never practiſed human ſacrifices. The real cauſe of the Nile's overflowing, is the quantity of rain which falls where it riſes, from the month of April to September; but to this they were ſtrangers for many ages.

Egypt was very early remarkable for its great buildings. Thebais with its hundred gates, has been particularly celebrated. Its obeliſks were alſo very extraordinary, and many centuries after the period I now treat of, the Emperor Conſtantius removed one of them to Rome, ſaid to be an entire ſtone of 180 feet in height. The pyramids which were deemed one of the ſeven wonders, and which remain to this day, ſeem to reſiſt the hand of time; and I ſhall conclude this Letter with a ſhort deſcription of them.

The foundation is ſquare, and covers eleven acres of Engliſh meaſure. It riſes to what

appears a point, but on its top there is a pretty conſiderable flat. The height of this pyramid, which is one of the largeſt, is 481 feet. There are protuberant ſtones on the outſide, by which men with difficulty may clamber to its ſummit, and by ſome authors they are called ſtairs. By others it is ſuppoſed, that the whole pyramid was covered with a cement, which time has rubbed off, and that what is taken for ſtairs, are only ſtones, which have been thus left naked. In this pyramid, there is a very large room, with an empty monument; and as Cheops built one, and was denied burial, it is ſuppoſed to have been intended for him. The reſt of the pyramids are of a ſimilar nature, and only vary as to ſize and materials, ſome being of brick, and others of marble and ſtone.

I have thus endeavoured to give you a juſt idea of the firſt ages of Egypt. There are indeed the names of many kings that I have omitted, but of whom nothing is recorded. This I have done on the authority of Sir Iſaac Newton, who in my opinion clearly proves, that they were either cotemporary

kings of the firſt petty ſtates into which this country was divided, or elſe they were invented by the Egyptian prieſts, for the purpoſe of giving a fictitious antiquity to their nation; and in either caſe, they are unworthy of our notice.

SECOND LETTER.

WHEN Seſoſtris ſubdued Ethiopia, he found the inhabitants were almoſt in a ſtate of nature. They therefore received their firſt civilization from the connection that enſued, and their manners and cuſtoms were nearly the ſame of the Egyptians. Of Lybia the ſame obſervations will equally apply, and Carthage is the only country of Africa that remains in this place to be touched on.

This afterwards celebrated city and ſtate was founded much about the time of the Trojan war, by a colony of Phœnicians, who followed the fortunes of Dido, the ſiſter of Pygmalion, King of Tyre. This cruel brother had murdered Sichæus, her huſband, in order to ſeize his treaſures, which were im-

menſe. Dido however diſappointed him, by carrying them off, and ſhe was accompanied by a number of her countrymen. The firſt place they touched at was the iſland of Cyprus, where, according to the cuſtom of that place, a number of women repaired to the ſhore for the purpoſe of proſtitution. Dido, who wanted females, did not let ſlip this opportunity of providing wives for her followers: And ſailing for Africa, ſhe purchaſed from the Aborigines that tract of land on which Carthage was erected.

Of the people among whom Dido ſettled little is known. That they were deſcended from Ham is generally believed, and it is probable that ſome of the Canaanites, when driven out of Egypt, might have fled to theſe coaſts. This is confirmed by ſome authors, who aſſert, that pillars have been diſcovered there with inſcriptions to that effect.

From the ſtrange confuſion in ancient Chronology, it has been ſuppoſed, that Carthage was founded ſome centuries after the deſtruction of Troy. But Sir Iſaac Newton makes

them nearly cotemporary, and with him agrees Virgil, the Latin poet; and ſurely no people had a better right to know the date of Carthage than the Romans, into whoſe hands all their records muſt have fallen. The city was in its infancy when viſited by Æneas. Both he and his Trojans were moſt hoſpitably received by Dido, and Æneas himſelf became the object of her love: but after he had enjoyed, he forſook her; and on his ſetting ſail for Italy, ſhe is ſaid to have deſtroyed herſelf. From thence to the year 790 hiſtory is ſilent as to the progreſs of Carthage. Their religion, cuſtoms, and manners were no doubt ſimilar to thoſe of the parent ſtate; for we find them, in their moſt flouriſhing days, ſending a ſhip annually with ſacrifices and preſents to the Temple of Hercules at Tyre.

I ſhall now proceed to the countries of Aſia. The Edomites firſt introduced the knowledge of letters and the ſtars into Aſſyria and Babylon. Seſoſtris alſo left ſome of the Egyptians amongſt them, and many more fled thither from Zerah the Ethiopian. Theſe new ſet-

tlers, by way of diſtinction, were called Chaldeans: and it became afterwards doubtful, whether the Egyptians or the inhabitants of theſe countries were firſt ſkilled in Aſtronomy. As to any great empire in this quarter, I hope I have ſufficiently proved in my Firſt Æra, that none did exiſt prior to the year 790.

When Seſoſtris ſubjected Syria, Tabrimon was its King. It regained its freedom ſoon after the death of that conqueror, and preſerved it till the days of Pul. The Syrians were great idolaters; and imitating the Egyptians, ſeveral of their Kings were honoured with deification.

From the year 1019 to the year 790 the Phœnicians, and particularly the city of Tyre, attained to a very high degree of wealth and conſequence. The Zidonians, or Edomites, who ſettled there, firſt turned their thoughts to the navigation of the Mediterranean; whilſt the Tyrians were employed by David, Solomon, and his ſucceſſors on the Red Sea. But Edom, where numbers of Eſau's deſcendants had remained, having ſucceſsfully re-

volted from Judah, about the year 887, the Tyrians were driven from that quarter; after which they betook themſelves to the commerce of the Mediterranean. In this they were ſo proſperous, as to excel, not only Zidon, but every other nation. Their extenſive trade brought them immenſe wealth, and numbers crowded to the ſmall territory of Phœnicia. This obliged them to plant colonies in various quarters, which added to their connexions; and they continued for ſeveral centuries the carriers of the world.

Pygmalion is the only King who was memorable in this period. Melcartus, a Tyrian navigator, was however greatly celebrated in theſe early times. He paſſed through the pillars of Hercules, diſcovering the Madeira and Canary Iſlands, together with thoſe of Britain and Thule. He alſo planted colonies on the coaſt of Spain, and particularly at what is now called Cadiz; and both there and at Tyre, temples and ſacred rites were inſtituted to him as the Tyrian Hercules.

The Phœnicians were the firſt who found out the art of making glaſs. Cloths of all

ſorts were likewiſe very early manufactured by them. The purple of Tyre, which they extracted from a ſmall ſhell fiſh, was moſt greedily ſought after by the ſurrounding Princes. Gold and ſilver was in great plenty, and coining was very early, if not firſt introduced in this country. In the times immediately before and after Pul, Phœnicia indeed excelled in almoſt every art, that was then known in the world; and her merchants were with juſtice compared to the richeſt monarchs of the earth.

But with all this worldly knowledge they practiſed the vileſt idolatries. Venus, under the name of Aſtarte, with her favourite Adonis, were worſhipped with the groſſeſt rites. To ſome others of their deities, they offered human ſacrifices, and their particular Prieſts cut and mangled their fleſh, as an acceptable duty to the idols whom they ſerved. What ſignifies wealth and grandeur, when accompanied with ſuch a debaſement of the human mind? And what muſt have been the ſtate of the heathen world, when ſuch horrid ſuper-

ſtitions were practiſed by the moſt civilized and poliſhed nation amongſt them?

In Phrygia Major the people had on ſome account or other aboliſhed their uſual form of government, much about the beginning of Seſoſtris's reign. On conſulting an oracle, they were ordered to chooſe for their King the firſt man who ſhould come in a cart to their temple of Jupiter. This happened to be Gordius, a poor farmer, and in commemoration of it, he placed the cart together with his plow, in the temple. To them he alſo faſtened a rope, in ſo intricate a knot, that he propheſied, whoever ſhould untie it, would be conqueror of the world. Midas, his ſon and ſucceſſor, was fabled to have his ears metamorphoſed into thoſe of aſſes, for preferring the muſic of Pan to Apollo; but for the particulars of this, and every other fable, I wiſh you to read the Abbé Banier, either in French or the Engliſh tranſlation, as he has taken great pains in that difficult inquiry.

Teucer, who was King of Phrygia Minor about the time that David died, tranſmitted

that crown to Dardanus, his ſon-in-law. Next reigned Erichthonius, and after him Troas, who founded the city of Troy. At its dedication all the neighbouring Princes were preſent, except Tantalus, who was omitted on account of his odious vices. In revenge for this neglect, he ſurpriſed Ganymede, the ſon of Troas, forcing him to his unnatural luſts; ſoon after which that youth died of grief. Troas in vain attacked Tantalus, but Ilus, his ſon, drove that monſter from his throne, at the ſame time uniting his territories to thoſe of Troy. It was fabled, that Tantalus was puniſhed in hell, by having gratifications apparently within his reach, but which he was never to obtain; and Ganymede, according to the Greek mythology, became the cup-bearer to Jupiter.

Pelops, the ſon of Tantalus, having in vain attempted to regain his father's crown, was forced to ſeek a ſettlement in Greece. Laomedon ſucceeded Ilus in Troy, during whoſe reign Seſoſtris ſubjected both the Phrygias. This Trojan King, however, long ſurvived the Egyptian; for we find the Ar-

gonauts were ill treated by him, on their landing in his territories, and they afterwards ſurpriſed Troy. On that occaſion Laomedon and all his ſons, except Priam, were ſlain; but the lives of the Trojan Princeſſes were ſpared, and Heſione, who was one of them, was compelled to marry a Grecian Prince, called Telamon.

Paris, the ſon of Priam, was deſtined to retaliate the capture of Heſione. He viſited Greece about the year 920, where he was received with great hoſpitality. But he ill deſerved the kindneſs that was ſhewn him, for he ſeduced and carried away Helen, the wife of Menelaus, who was brother to Agamemnon, King of Mycenæ. The Greek Princes thereupon united in demanding her reſtoration; and on Priam's refuſal, they engaged in the celebrated ſiege of Troy. That city withſtood their utmoſt efforts for ten years, but at length it was taken and deſtroyed by ſtratagem. With it the Trojan kingdom alſo expired; but Æneas, the ſon of Anchiſes, and a near relation of Priam, together with a number of his countrymen,

eſcaped the general ſlaughter, and afterwards ſettled in Italy. Homer's Iliad gives a full account of the actions of the great men on both ſides; and it is abſolutely neceſſary you ſhould read it, either in the original, or in Pope's moſt happy tranſlation.

Sarpedon, the brother of Minos, King of Crete, brought a body of Cretans into Lycia. This was about the end of Solomon's reign, and he introduced navigation and ſeveral other arts. It became ſoon after a conſiderable maritime ſtate, and its laws and regulations are highly celebrated. The ſupreme power was veſted in deputies from its different cities; which is the earlieſt inſtance I have met with of a republican form of government. Beſides theſe Cretans, a number of other Greeks made ſettlements in Aſia Minor; and theſe were chiefly erected on the ruins of the Trojan kingdom.

As to the reſt of Aſia, Scythia alone affords any thing for my preſent æra. About the times of Solomon, its inhabitants were divided into a number of petty ſtates. The moſt conſiderable of theſe was called the

Royal Scythians, and when any undertaking united the different nations, they all obeyed the monarch of this diſtinguiſhed tribe. Thoſe warlike females, called Amazons, are by ſome ſuppoſed to be alſo of Scythian extraction. But whether they were of Scythian, or Lybian origin, it ſeems pretty certain that ſuch a body of women did exiſt on the banks of the river Thermodon. They allowed the men of the neighbouring ſtates to cohabit with them at appointed times, on condition that the male children ſhould go to the fathers, whilſt the female remained with their mothers. Theſe were trained to arms, their right breaſt being cut off, to give them freer uſe of them; and by theſe means, this ſtrange eſtabliſhment is ſuppoſed to have continued for many years.

Theft was ſeverely puniſhed, but almoſt unknown amongſt the Scythians. Their wealth conſiſted in their flocks, and having no fixed habitations, they changed their ſituation as occaſion required; for which purpoſe they uſed waggons, covered with the ſkins of wild beaſts. Thoſe whom they took

priſoners were employed in tending their flocks, or in other menial offices; for they deemed war and hunting the only honourable employments. They were very expert horſemen, and remarkable for the bow and arrow. Darts and ſcymetars were alſo in uſe amongſt them. The ſkins of their enemies they either fixed to their horſes bridles, or wore them as a part of their dreſs. At their feaſts they drank out of the ſculls of thoſe who had fallen by their hands; and no Scythian was admitted on ſuch occaſions, who had not ſlain an opponent in battle. When an agreement was made for any purpoſe, each perſon put a little of his blood into a bowl of wine, which being taſted by all the contracting parties, the engagement was deemed inviolable. Every man had as many wives as he thought proper; and the women uſed particular mixtures to render their complexions agreeable. When any one died, the body was ſent round to the particular friends of the deceaſed, each of whom made a feaſt, at which the remains were placed before they were interred. But the rites obſerved at the

death of a Scythian King were ſtill more extraordinary.

The body of the monarch being embalmed, was conveyed in a chariot through the different Provinces. On this occaſion the Scythians wounded themſelves, cut off their hair, and alſo a bit of one of their ears. When the corpſe was brought to the place of burial, which was on the river Boriſthenes, a ſquare hole was prepared ſurrounded by ſpears. A concubine, a cook, a groom, a waiter, a meſſenger, who had belonged to the deceaſed, were then put to death, and interred with him. Some of his horſes were alſo killed, and together with different utenſils, were likewiſe thrown into the grave, over which a vaſt mound of earth was erected. But the ceremony did not end here; for when a year had expired, fifty young officers were ſlain and ſtuffed, and then fixed on the backs of as many horſes, who had ſhared the ſame fate; after which they were placed around the tomb.

There was another very ſtrange cuſtom as to their Kings. The moſt ſolemn oath was

by the royal name; and they ſuppoſed that perjury brought a diſeaſe upon the Monarch. When a King fell ſick, they therefore ſent for three of their Prieſts, or Wiſe-men, who, by means of ſome willow ſticks, divined the tranſgreſſor. If the accuſed denied the guilt, three more Prieſts were conſulted, and if they confirmed the divination of the former, the perſon fixed on ſuffered death. If they differed in opinion, three others undertook the buſineſs, whoſe deciſion was final; and if the accuſed was alſo acquitted by them, then the firſt Prieſts were gagged and conſumed to aſhes.

Amongſt their deities Mars was allowed the precedence, and he was worſhipped in groves of oak. On his altars was placed a ſcymetar, which they dipt in the blood of the victim; and it was often human, as they ſacrificed every hundredth priſoner taken in war. After that ceremony, they threw the blood that remained againſt the ſurrounding oaks, which in time became incruſted with it; and thoſe trees were deemed ſo ſacred, that the wounding of their bark was puniſhed

with death. Swine were never ſacrificed, nor was the fleſh of thoſe animals uſed, it being deemed abominable.

Such were the general cuſtoms of the Scythians. Particular tribes added ſome others, but every thing foreign was prohibited on pain of death. The Sarmatians allowed no woman to marry who had not killed an enemy. The Taurians ſacrificed all ſtrangers that were thrown upon their coaſts. The Agathyrſians had all their women in common. The Maſſagetes had particular women, whom they called their wives, but ſtill all were allowed a promiſcuous intercourſe. They alſo put their old people to death, feaſting on their bodies. The Sun was their chief object of adoration; to which they ſacrificed horſes on account of their ſwiftneſs. The Budians, or Androphagi, were another of theſe tribes; and they are ſaid to have been profeſſed cannibals.

The Scythian laws and manners continued for ages the ſame. This was the natural conſequence of their having no fixed reſi-

dence—of their deſpiſing agriculture—and of their prohibiting all intercourſe with ſtrangers. Horace and Juſtin celebrate the morals and virtues of theſe people; and I am not ſure, but they were leſs infamous than the Romans, who were cotemporary with thoſe authors. In like manner we might perhaps, with juſtice, prefer the ſavages of America to the preſent inhabitants of Italy; but ſurely neither the barbarous manners of the Indians, nor the poliſhed depravities of the Italians, are worthy of our praiſe.

THIRD LETTER.

THE kingdom of Sicyon, in Peloponneſus, continued diſtinct for ſeveral reigns, but at length was added to that of Argos. In this latter ſtate the ſucceſſion of Kings is very ill aſcertained; but after ſome time, its territories became divided between Acriſius and Prœtus. Acriſius married Eurydice, the daughter of Lacedemon, King of Sparta. By her he had a female child named Danæ, who, according

to an oracle, was to bring forth a ſon that ſhould ſlay his grandfather. To avert this, Danæ was ſhut up in a ſtrong tower covered with braſs; but her uncle Prœtus is ſuppoſed to have bribed her keepers, in conſequence of which ſhe bore a ſon to him: From whence the fable of Jupiter's enjoying Danæ, by changing himſelf into a ſhower of gold.

The infant and its mother being ſet adrift in a ſmall veſſel, by order of Acriſius, were thrown upon the iſland of Seryphus, where both were taken care of by Dictys, the brother of Polydectes, King of that iſland. This was about the year 1028, and her ſon received the name of Perſeus. When he approached manhood, he gave a very early diſplay of his ſpirit, by forcing Polydectus to deſiſt from offering violence to his mother; and the King, in order to get rid of ſo troubleſome a gueſt, ſtimulated him to ſeek for glory, by going againſt a monſter which infeſted the coaſt of Africa. It was called Gorgon, and the young hero not only cut off its head, but likewiſe reſcued Andromeda, a

beautiful Princeſs, from a great ſea animal to which ſhe was expoſed. In return, he got her to wife with a large dowry, after which he went back to Seryphus. The head of the Gorgon is fabled to have had the power of turning whoever looked on it into ſtone. He is therefore ſaid to have applied it to Polydectes and his guards: and having thus deſtroyed that tyrant, and reſcued his mother, he beſtowed the crown on Dictys, their protector.

Perſeus now paſſed into Greece, in order to conſult the Delphic oracle. Thither Acriſius at the ſame time happened to repair, and was accidentally ſlain by his grandſon, whilſt both were ignorant of their connexion. Perſeus then became entitled to the crown of Argos; but not chooſing to fill the throne of his unfortunate grandfather, he effected a change with Megapentes, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Prœtus, which diviſion of the old kingdom was from henceforth called Mycenæ. Perſeus afterwards became the leader of the Greeks againſt Seſoſtris, and dying about the

year 958, he was ſucceeded by his ſon Sthenelus.

Euryſtheus was the ſucceſſor of his father Sthenelus. He had, however, a dangerous competitor in Hercules, the ſon of Alcmena and Amphytrion; for Amphytrion was the grandſon of Perſeus by an elder branch, though he had been obliged to fly on account of accidentally ſlaying his father-in-law. An oracle, however, pronounced, that Hercules muſt ſerve Euryſtheus for twelve years; and though Hercules at firſt went diſtracted, he afterwards ſubmitted to what he deemed the will of the gods.

His prodigious ſtrength, and the twelve labours which he performed for Euryſtheus, you will find in Banier. The account of his death is as extraordinary as his life. On one occaſion he had ſhot a Centaur with a poiſoned arrow, who was attempting the chaſtity of Dejanira, the wife of Hercules. The Centaur, when dying, meditated a ſevere revenge, by informing her, that the fidelity of her huſband might be ſecured, if ſhe would

anoint his ſhirt with a little of the blood that ſlowed from the Centaur's wound. As Dejanira was well convinced of Hercules being inconſtant, ſhe tried the experiment. The conſequence was ſuch dreadful pain, that he choſe a voluntary death, and ſhe, in a fit of diſtraction, followed his example.

There is no developing the fabulous accounts of Hercules and Perſeus. All that appears certain is, that there were ſuch men who were remarkable for their great bodily powers, and for the wonderful exploits which they performed. And as courage and ſtrength were, in thoſe barbarous times, deemed ſuperior to every other qualification, they both became objects of deification.

On the death of Hercules, his ſon Hyllus laid claim to the crown of Mycenæ. Before this, Atreus, the ſon of Pelops, had married the daughter of Euryſtheus, and he now aſſiſted in defending the kingdom. By their joint efforts Hyllus was repulſed, and Euryſtheus falling in battle, Atreus ſucceeded to the throne.

It was not long till Hyllus renewed his at-

tempt; but it was now agreed, that the conteſt ſhould be decided by two champions. Hyllus appeared in perſon, whilſt Atreus truſted his cauſe to Eumelus, afterwards King of Arcadia. This combat ended in the death of Hyllus, whereby the crown was confirmed to the offspring of Pelops.

The vices of Tantalus ſeem to have extended to his poſterity; the hiſtory of Pelops's family being one of the moſt ſhocking that is any where recorded. Thyeſtes, the brother of Atreus, found means to debauch his ſiſter-in-law, and the incenſed King having diſcovered it, liſtened only to the dictates of revenge. In accompliſhing it, the innocent ſuffered for the guilty; for he ſlew two boys, who were ſons to Thyeſtes, and having them dreſſed as victuals in a diſguiſed manner, they were ſerved up to the adulterous father. Thyeſtes, ignorant of their death, ſatisfied his appetite on their remains; after which Atreus diſcloſed the dreadful ſecret, and having no way of gratifying his reſentment, Thyeſtes was glad to ſave himſelf by a precipitate flight.

Beſides this commerce with Atreus's wife, Thyeſtes was guilty of inceſt with his own daughter. The fruit of this connexion was Ægiſthus, who, having attained to manhood, revenged his infant brothers by murdering Atreus. This happened about the year 922, and Agamemnon, who was either the real or adopted ſon of Atreus, ſucceeded to his crown.

Agamemnon, and Menelaus, his brother, had married two ſiſters, who were daughters to Tyndarus, King of Sparta. The wife of the firſt was called Clytemneſtra, and that of the latter Helen. When Paris carried off Helen, it was made a common cauſe. The Grecian Princes then proceeded to the choice of their general, and Agamemnon was elected to this high command. Before this a reconciliation had been brought about between him and Ægiſthus, who was now ſo great a favourite, that Agamemnon not only intruſted the affairs of the kingdom, but alſo Clytemneſtra to his care.

When all were ready to ſet ſail for Troy, the winds continued for a long time unpropi-

tious. On this they conſulted Calchas, the moſt eminent of the Grecian ſoothſayers, who declared, that no favourable wind could be obtained unleſs Iphigenia, the virgin daughter of Agamemnon, was ſent as a ſacrifice to Diana, in her Temple at Tauris, in Scythia. Ambition was uppermoſt in the mind of Agamemnon; and notwithſtanding all the tears and entreaties of Clytemneſtra, he devoted his daughter to deſtruction.

The winds ſoon after proving favourable, Agamemnon landed on the Phrygian ſhores. The ſubſequent ſiege gave full ſcope to all the deſigns of Ægiſthus; and the irritated Clytemneſtra yielded to his importunities. But when the victorious Agamemnon, after ten years abſence, reviſited Mycenæ, they plunged ſtill deeper into guilt; for the abuſed monarch was aſſaſſinated, and Ægiſthus then uſurped the crown, and married Clytemneſtra.

The death of Agamemnon was not long unrevenged. He had left a ſon named Oreſtes, who eſcaping the deſigns of his enemies,

was educated in concealment; and when he arrived at manhood, he not only regained the throne, but deprived his father's murderers of life. The reflection, however, of having put his mother to death, for a time bereaved him of his ſenſes, when he had the additional misfortune of loſing a beloved miſtreſs, to whom he was betrothed. This was Hermione, the daughter of Helen and Menelaus, whom they now gave to Pyrrhus, the ſon of Achilles: but Oreſtes no ſooner recovered, than he deſtroyed Pyrrhus, and eſpouſed Hermione; in whoſe right he afterwards became entitled to the kingdom of Sparta.

Iphigenia had eſcaped her deſtined fate; for inſtead of being ſacrificed, Thoas, the then King of Tauris, made her Prieſteſs to Diana. Oreſtes, on hearing this, attempted to carry her off, but was ſeized and doomed to die. He had a friend named Pylades, ſo like him in perſon and manners, that it was ſcarcely poſſible to mark a diſtinction. No ſooner did the news of Oreſtes's misfortune reach him, than Pylades reſolved to ſave his life, though at the expence of his own. He

accordingly repaired to Tauris, and on the day of execution exclaimed, that he was Oreſtes; but Oreſtes could not allow of ſuch a ſacrifice, and declared the fraud that was intended. Thoas in vain attempted to diſcriminate the real from the fictitious; and ſtruck with ſo generous a contention, he gave life and liberty to both: not long after which Iphigenia alſo found means to return to Mycenæ.

It is here neceſſary to treat of the kingdom of Argos. Its crown for a ſhort time continued in the line of Prætus. It then went under ſeveral revolutions, but about twenty years before the Trojan war Adraſtus was its King. He was engaged in a war with Thebes, having given a daughter in marriage to Polynices, a Prince of that country. Eteocles, the brother of Polynices, had unjuſtly excluded him from his ſhare in the government, and Adraſtus, calling to his aid Tydeus, to whom he had given another daughter, and alſo four other men of eminence, he reſolved to reinſtate Polynices. From the number of leaders that combined, this was

ſtyled the war of the Seven Captains; but it proved unſucceſsful, all but Adraſtus being ſlain, nor did he long ſurvive it.

Ægialeus, the ſon of Adraſtus, Therſander, the ſon of Polynices, Diomedes, the ſon of Tydeus, and the ſons of the other four captains, now reſolved to revenge the defeat of their parents. They were called the Epigoni, and proving ſucceſsful, they placed Therſander on the throne of Thebes. Ægialeus ſoon after died without iſſue, when he was ſucceeded by his nephew Diomedes. This Prince was at the Trojan war, but his queen having entered into a criminal connexion during his abſence, he thought proper to abandon his country; on which Oreſtes took advantage of the troubles which enſued, and made himſelf maſter of that kingdom; which, together with Sparta and Mycenæ, he tranſmitted to his ſons Penthilus and Tiſamenes.

I want to lay before you the ſtate of Peloponneſus when the Heraclidæ returned, and I ſhall now proceed to Sparta. Œbalus was the ſeventh King from Lelex its founder.

He married Gorgophone, the daughter of Perſeus and Andromeda, by whom he had two ſons, Hippocoon and Tyndarus. At his death he bequeathed the kingdom between them, notwithſtanding which, Hippocoon ſeized on all; but Hercules ſoon after put him to death, and placed the ſceptre in the hands of Tyndarus; from which tranſaction the Heraclidæ alledged the Spartan crown to be theirs by right of conqueſt.

Tyndarus, by Leda his wife, had two ſons and as many daughters. The firſt were called Caſtor and Pollux—the latter Clytemneſtra and Helen. Helen was ſo beautiful from her infancy, that Theſeus, King of Athens, ran away with her when ſhe was only ſeven years old. This he did to ſecure her when at riper years; but ſhe was ſoon after reſcued by her brothers. In a little time her ſuitors became ſo numerous, that her father bound all who wooed her by an oath, that they would protect her to him whom ſhe ſhould prefer. And this obligation ſeems to have been the origin of that general confederacy which took place againſt Troy.

Menelaus's claim to the crown of Sparta was in conſequence of his connexion with Helen; but at his death he attempted to tranſmit it to his iſſue by another woman. This was oppoſed by Oreſtes, who was entitled both by his mother and Hermione; and he proved ſucceſsful in the conteſt, tranſmitting Sparta, as well as the reſt of his dominions, to his offspring.

When Pelops was driven from Aſia Minor, he landed in Peloponneſus, ſuppoſed to be ſo called from him. Several places in the territories of Elis ſubmitted to him; and he afterwards paſſed into the continental part of Greece, where he made himſelf maſter of Ætolia. The exact ſtate of his ſettlement in the kingdom of Elis is not recorded, but Dius was the monarch of that country when the Heraclidæ returned.

Elis is particularly celebrated for the games exhibited at its city of Olympia. Their origin is generally aſcribed to ſome of the Idæi Dactyli from Crete, who inſtituted them in honour of Minos. Pelops renewed them, as did alſo the Grecian Hercules; but theſe

games did not become fixed and permanent till after my preſent æra.

In Arcadia Cypſelus was its King at the return of the Heraclidæ, and of its monarchs before him little or nothing is ſaid. This is the country celebrated by the poets as the ſeat of rural happineſs. Being in the heart of Peloponneſus, it was excluded from navigation, and had little or no intercourſe with ſtrangers. Its inhabitants were chiefly employed in tending their flocks, during which they amuſed themſelves with pipes and ſongs. The climate was alſo delightful; and when theſe things were heightened by poetic fancy, the ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes of Arcadia appeared to be truly happy. Pan was naturally their chief deity, and a magnificent temple was erected to him in their city of Tegea. Arcadia is alſo famous for its river Styx, which riſes out of the lake Pheneus, whoſe waters were ſo cold and corroſive, as to kill thoſe who drank of it, from whence it was called the river of Hell.

Corinth was a new ſtate in Peloponneſus, erected about the year 983 by Siſyphus, a

great grandſon to Deucalion, King of Theſſaly. He inſtituted games to the memory of his nephew Melicertus; and being celebrated on the Iſthmus that united Peloponneſus to the reſt of Greece, they were ſtyled the Iſthmian games.

The kingdom, afterwards called Achaia, became the property of Ion, another great grandſon to Deucalion, by his marrying the daughter of one of its Kings; and his poſterity were in poſſeſſion of it when the Heraclidæ returned. Of Meſſene there is nothing to obſerve; and ſuch was the ſituation of Peloponneſus about the year 825.

I ſhall now relate the invaſion of this Peninſula by the poſterity of Hercules. After the death of Hyllus, his ſon Cleodus revived the purſuit of his father, but with the ſame ill ſucceſs; nor was Ariſtomachus, the ſon of Cleodus, more fortunate. The latter left three ſons, Temenus, Creſphontes, and Ariſtodemus, who reſolved either to periſh like their immediate anceſtors, or recover the territories, which they claimed in Peloponneſus.

Beſides other forces, they were particularly aided by the Dorians. Oxylus, who laid claim to the crown of Elis, as a deſcendant of Æthlius its founder, was alſo their ally. The territories which they firſt attacked were thoſe poſſeſſed by Penthilus and Tiſamenes, the ſons of Oreſtes; but they ſeem to have made little reſiſtance, and Sparta, Argos, and Mycenæ, almoſt immediately ſubmitted to the Heraclidæ. Meſſene ſhared the ſame fate; and they placed Oxylus on the throne of Elis; at the ſame time enjoining him to reſtore the Olympic games, and promiſing, on oath to protect his country. Corinth likewiſe received a King from them, whoſe name was Aletes, and who was alſo ſprung from Hercules.

Argos and Mycenæ were again formed into one kingdom, which ever after bore the firſt name, and it fell to Temenus. Meſſene became the property of Creſphontes; and Ariſtodemus being dead, Sparta was allotted to his two ſons, Euryſthenes and Procles.

In this general revolution, Arcadia was the only country of Peloponneſus that under-

went no alteration; for the deſcendants of Ion were forced to take ſhelter in Attica. Achæus, the brother of Ion, had got a part of Lacedemonia, and his deſcendants flying from the Heraclidæ, expelled the Ionians. They then gave the name of Achaia to that country, and formed a ſort of ariſtocracy, which continued for ſeveral centuries. From the year 825, where Sir Iſaac Newton places the return of the Heraclidæ, nothing material aroſe in Peloponneſus till after the year 790, and I ſhall therefore proceed to the continental part of Greece.

FOURTH LETTER.

IN Cecropia, Cecrops was ſucceeded by Cranaus. Amphictyon, the ſon of Deucalion, King of Theſſaly, married his daughter Attis, and having obtained the crown in her right, he called the country Attica. How he loſt this kingdom, is not known; but we find Ericthonius, who was an Egyptian, ſoon after poſſeſſed of it; and Amphictyon, at the ſame time, removed to the petty ſtate of

Thermopylæ. Amphictyon ſeems to have been apprehenſive of future injury, for, leaguing with eleven other cities, deputies from each conſulted on the general ſafety; and this was the origin of the Amphictionic council.

Ericthonius changed the name of his capital, Cecropia, to that of Athens, by which it was ever afterwards known. His ſon Cecrops ſucceeded him, but was dethroned by his brother Pandion; and Niſus, the eldeſt ſon and ſucceſſor of Pandion, was likewiſe depoſed by one of his brothers, whoſe name was Ægeus.

Ægeus begun his reign about the year 994, and having no children, he went to conſult the Delphic Oracle, how this want could be ſupplied. Not clearly underſtanding the reſponſe, he viſited Pitheus, a petty King of Greece, who was remarkable for expounding what was doubtful in ſuch anſwers. His explanation was, that a ſon would be the conſequence of Ægeus's ſleeping with Æthra, the daughter of Pitheus; all which accordingly happened. Theſeus was the fruit

of this connection, and was educated in concealment at the court of Pitheus, leſt Pallas, the brother of Ægeus, who had a numerous iſſue, ſhould deſtroy him. When Theſeus had attained to manhood, he was diſpatched to Athens with a ſword, which was to be the proof of his extraction. In his way thither, he is ſaid to have performed many marvellous achievements; and ſoon after his arrival, he made himſelf known to his father Ægeus.

It is here neceſſary to go back to a tranſaction which happened a little after the birth of Theſeus. Androgeus, the ſon of Minos, King of Crete, had been extremely ſucceſsful in the Athenian games; but the envy which attended it, proved fatal, and he periſhed by the treachery of his competitors. Minos, who was juſtly incenſed, gave Ægeus the choice of ſending ſeven youths, and as many virgins, on every eighth year to Crete, or to abide by the chance of war. Ægeus choſe the former, and this tribute was for the third time preparing when Theſeus arrived at Athens.

It is ſaid, that Minos had an extraordinary

monſter, half man half bull, called a Minotaur; which had ſprung from the abominable luſts of his queen. It was confined in an intricate labyrinth, from which it was ſuppoſed none could eſcape, and the unfortunate Athenians, heretofore ſent, had been put into this place, where they were devoured by the Minotaur; but it was agreed, that if any one of thoſe who were thus expoſed, ſhould ſlay the Minotaur, then the tribute was to ceaſe. Theſeus therefore reſolved to reſcue his country from that grievous affliction, or periſh. He accordingly embarked as one of the deſtined victims; but his ſtrength and valour prevailing, he ſlew the Minotaur, and ſaved himſelf and his companions.

Minos was ſo pleaſed with the heroiſm of Theſeus, that he offered him his daughter Ariadne in marriage. But this good underſtanding ceaſed, on Theſeus refuſing to leave behind him an Athenian virgin, with whom the Cretan King had become enamoured; and Minos, in revenge, confined Theſeus in that labyrinth where he had ſo lately proved victorious. Ariadne, however, had fixed her

affections upon this young hero, and by means of a clue of thread, with which ſhe furniſhed him, he made his eſcape. He then embarked with Ariadne and his companions; and touching at Naxos, in his way to Athens, he baſely ſet ſail from that iſland without his kind preſerver, who afterwards paſſed into Egypt, as I have elſewhere related.

The ſails of the veſſel in which Theſeus went to Crete, were black, as beſt ſuited to the melancholy errand. It was therefore agreed, that if ſucceſsful, white ones ſhould be hoiſted on their return. This was unfortunately neglected, and his anxious father, from thence conceiving his ſon to be no more, drowned himſelf in that ſea, from him called the Ægean.

It was about the year 968, that Theſeus by this means became entitled to the throne of Athens. He began his reign by procuring a cloſer connexion between the cities of Attica, than had before exiſted. They were twelve in number, and deputies from each now formed a council, called the Prytaneum, which made laws that bound the whole

This was the firſt attempt amongſt the Greeks to unite the petty ſtates that owned a common ſovereign. Till then every city had diſtinct laws, and though their petty princes acknowledged themſelves in ſome degree ſubordinate to the chief king, yet his power was neither fixed nor permanent. This example of Attica was followed in other quarters, and it is from this period we may fairly date the riſe of thoſe Greek kingdoms which were afterwards ſo conſpicuous.

The reign of Theſeus was otherwiſe of little conſequence; but towards the cloſe of it, he and Pirithous, king of the Lapithæ, agreed to aſſiſt each other in carrying off the beautiful Helen, and a daughter of Aidoneus, king of the Moloſſians. In the firſt they proved ſucceſsful, and Helen became Theſeus's by lot. But on the latter occaſion, Pirithous was ſlain, and Theſeus taken priſoner. Helen was then reſcued by her brothers, and Meneſtheus, a grandſon to Erichthonius, made himſelf maſter of the Athenian crown. Theſeus afterwards obtained his liberty through the interpoſition of Hercules;

when not being able to wreſt the ſceptre from its uſurper, he retired to the iſland of Scyros, where he was put to death at the inſtigation of Meneſtheus. This happened a little after the Argonautic expedition, and Demophoon, the ſon of Theſeus, was excluded till the Trojan war. To it Meneſtheus led the Athenians, where he loſt his life; and then Demophoon recovered the throne of his father; from whence there was nothing memorable till the reign of Codrus.

When the Heraclidæ had fully ſettled themſelves in Peloponneſus, they attempted the conqueſt of Attica. An oracle had however declared, that whatever ſide firſt loſt a king, ſhould prove ſucceſsful. This being known to Codrus, the then King of Athens, he nobly reſolved to ſecure his country. For this purpoſe he diſguiſed himſelf as a peaſant, and entering the enemy's camp, he in that garb provoked a ſoldier to ſlay him; which was no ſooner diſcovered, than the Heraclidæ retired with the utmoſt precipitation.

It was about the year 804, that this king thus glorioufly ſacrificed himſelf to the proſ-

perity of Attica. He had governed it with the greateſt virtue and ability for upwards of twenty years; and the Athenians alleging they ſhould never have ſuch another king, complimented his memory by aboliſhing the regal dignity. They however ſubſtituted in its place a magiſtrate of nearly equal power, called the Archon; and this new office, which was for life, they conferred on Medon, the eldeſt ſon of the heroic Codrus. Medon had ſeveral brothers, who, not liking his government, paſſed over into Aſia Minor; and as the Ionians who had been driven out of Peloponneſus, accompanied them, they gave the name of Ionia to that ſettlement which they formed.

The next country which I ſhall treat of, is Bœotia, or Thebes. Cadmus was ſucceeded by Polydorus, his ſon, whoſe reign was of ſhort duration; and his ſon Labdacus being a minor at his father's death, the care of the government was given to his grandfather Nycteus. A war now broke out with Epopeus, King of Sicyon, in which Nycteus loſt

his life; and Labdacus was then committed to the care of Lycus, the brother of his former guardian.

The Sicyon war had been occaſioned by Epopeus's carrying away Antiope, the daughter of Nycteus; but Epopeus likewiſe falling in the conteſt, Lamedon, his ſucceſſor, wiſely put an end to it by ſending back Antiope. She was however delivered of two ſons in conſequence of this adventure, who were called Amphion and Zetus; and as ſhe had conceived them to a king, they were as uſual ſaid to be the offspring of Iao-Pater or Jupiter; for Iao-Pater means the great father, or king of his people.

Labdacus's reign was only remarkable for a war with Pandion, king of Athens, about the year 1002. At his death, Laius, his ſon and ſucceſſor, was a minor, and Lycus became his guardian alſo.

Amphion and Zetus being grown up, their mother inſpired them with the moſt unjuſtifiable ambition. They ſlew their great uncle Lycus, and forcing Laius to fly, uſurped the kingdom. This happened about the year

990; but in the courſe of a very ſhort time, they either died or were expelled, and Laius was reſtored. He married Jocaſta, the daughter or ſiſter of Creon, who was likewiſe deſcended from Cadmus. She brought him a male child; but Laius having been told, that he ſhould loſe his life by his own ſon, gave orders that the infant ſhould be deſtroyed. His ſervants however only expoſed it, where ſome of the ſubjects of Polybus, King of Corinth, found him, and being brought to that Prince, he educated the boy, giving him the name of Œdipus. When he attained to manhood, Polybus informed him of the manner he was found, on which the youth, anxious to know the ſecret of his birth, haſted to conſult the Delphic Oracle. Thither at the ſame time came Laius, to inquire about his ſon, whom he had now heard was only expoſed; and an accidental ſcuffle happening, Laius, as had been predicted, fell by the hand of Œdipus.

On the death of Laius, Creon aſſumed the Theban government; at the ſame time, pro-

claiming that he would give Jocaſta, with the kingdom, to whoever would explain the Sphynx's riddle. This is ſaid to have been a monſter ſhaped like a woman, that infeſted the neighbourhood of Thebes. Her cuſtom was to propoſe a myſterious queſtion to every traveller, and if it was not explained, ſhe put them to death; but whoever ſhould expound the riddle, was to break the charm, and ſhe herſelf was then to be deſtroyed.

Allured by the reward which Creon offered, Œdipus reſolved to undertake this dangerous adventure; and proving ſucceſsful, he received Jocaſta and the kingdom. For ſome years an happy ignorance of his birth continued, and Eteocles and Polynices were the offspring of this marriage; but when, at length, the fatal ſecret was diſcloſed, he tore out his eyes, and gave himſelf up to the moſt frantic ſorrow. It ſoon ended his days, and the dreadful ſcene was cloſed by the ſuicide of Jocaſta.

When Eteocles and Polynices reached manhood, they agreed to reign alternately; but Eteocles, who was the firſt to govern,

at the expiration of his term, refuſed to reſign. Polynices thereupon fled to Adraſtus, king of Argos, and having married his daughter, he ſecured that power in his favour.

On the commencement of the war by the ſeven captains, Eteocles had recourſe to an oracle. The reſponſe was, that Thebes would not then be taken, provided Menœceus, the ſon of Creon, ſacrificed himſelf to Mars. The noble youth accordingly did ſo, and the prediction was fulfilled. But though Thebes did not fall, Eteocles was ſlain; and what was very remarkable, he and Polynices received their mortal wounds from the hands of each other. In the enſuing conflict with the Epigoni, Laodomas, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Eteocles, loſt his life, and Thebes being now taken, Therſander, the ſon of Polynices, aſcended its throne. He led the Thebans to the Trojan war, where he periſhed; and after a few more reigns, the government of Thebes became republican.

The culture of the grape in Greece, began in Bœotia, and Bacchus, the ſon of Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, having firſt introduced the uſe of wine amongſt the Grecians, was afterwards worſhipped as its Deity. The hill of Helicon and its ſpring, deemed ſacred to the Muſes, were ſituated in this country; and Bœotia was alſo remarkable for its cave Trophonia, from whence an oracle to Jupiter iſſued its predictions.

Hellen, who ſucceeded his father Deucalion in Theſſaly, tranſmitted the regal dignity to his ſon Æolus. Crethus next reigned, and after him Æſon, who voluntarily retired from royalty about the year 955, when Pelias, his brother, aſſumed the government.

Æſon had a ſon named Jaſon, and when he arrived at manhood, Pelias, in order to get rid of him, is ſuppoſed to have planned, or highly forwarded the Argonautic expedition. It is hard to get at the true cauſe of this celebrated voyage, though there can be no doubt of its having taken place. The fabulous account is, that Phryxus and his ſiſter

Helle fled from their ſtep-mother Ino, the daughter of Cadmus, who had married their father Athamas, and being both mounted on a golden ram, they attempted to paſs into Aſia. Helle however fell off, being drowned in the narrow ſea, from her called Helleſpont; but Phryxus got ſafe over, and took ſhelter in the court of Æetes, king of Colchis. Here he hung up the golden fleece of his ram, in a grove of oaks, which was watched by an ever-wakeful dragon; and the recovery of this fleece, according to the fable, was the object of the Argonauts.

The fact concealed under this fiction is imagined to be, that Phryxus and Helle did actually fly from their ſtep-mother, at the ſame time carrying away a great part of their father's treaſure, who was brother to Siſyphus, king of Corinth, and extremely rich. Phryxus then went over to Colchis, where he died; and after that event, the Greeks conceived the riches left behind him ſhould be delivered up by Æetes. But Sir Iſaac Newton thinks this was only the oſtenſible object

of the voyage, and that as ſo many of the chief youth of Greece were concerned, and ſo many countries viſited, it was undertaken for ſome great political purpoſe. He conjectures, it was a ſolemn embaſſy to ſtir up the nations which Seſoſtris had ſubjected, to ſhake off the Egyptian yoke, and alſo to ſtrengthen Greece by new alliances. And when we conſider that Seſoſtris was ſome time dead, and Egypt in a ſtate of diſtraction, ſuch a conduct was wiſe in Greece, which had ſo lately been threatened from the ſame quarter. It is impoſſible to come at certainty on ſo obſcure a ſubject, but I know not a more rational way of accounting for this memorable undertaking.

Whatever was the object, it was the firſt great effort of the Greeks as navigators. They built a veſſel on purpoſe, called the Argo, which was taken from the model of an Egyptian ſhip; and as ſhe was to ſail to diſtant coaſts, it is ſuppoſed that Chiron, an old man, who lived in Theſſaly, and Muſæus, the tutor of Orpheus, who were both celebrated for their wiſdom, made out a delinea-

tion of the heavenly bodies, with inſtructions as to the courſe which they ſhould ſteer.

They ſet ſail about the year 937, under the command of Jaſon. He had with him Hercules, Orpheus, Æſculapius, Caſtor, Pollux, and all the moſt eminent of the Grecian youth. After touching at ſeveral places, they entered the Euxine ſea, and diſembarking near the foot of Mount Caucaſus, they proceeded by land to the court of Colchis.

Though Æetes received them with outward reſpect, and promiſed what they came for on certain conditions, yet his ſecret intention was to deſtroy them: but his daughter Medea falling in love with Jaſon, procured him what he wanted, and flying with him and his company, they all regained the Argo. They then again ſet ſail, and having touched on the coaſts of Italy, Sicily, Crete, and other countries, they reſpectively returned to their native homes.

There is a fable, that Prometheus was chained by Jupiter to Mount Caucaſus, where a vulture perpetually fed on his liver, till at

the expiration of thirty years, Hercules relieved him. Now we have ſeen Seſoſtris leaving Prometheus to guard that paſs. In the courſe of thirty years, moſt, if not all of his troops were probably dead, and therefore he could not remove with ſafety; but when Hercules and the Argonauts came that way, he was enabled to regain his liberty. The uneaſineſs of his mind was poetically figured by the Vulture, as the chain indicated his ſtaying contrary to his inclination; and this gives us an eaſy ſolution to the fable.

The accounts of Jaſon and Medea after their voyage, are ſo wildly fabulous, as to be totally unintelligible. Pelias left the crown to his ſon Acaſtus, who ſeems to have been depoſed by Peleus, the ſon of Æacus, king of Ægina. Achilles, ſo famous in the Trojan war, was the ſon and ſucceſſor of Peleus, and received his education from the aged Chiron, who had before been the tutor of Jaſon, Hercules, and Æſculapius. What became of this territory after the death of Achilles, is not known; but we find that his ſon Pyrrhus ſettled in Epirus.

The Lapithæ were alſo a people of Theſſaly, over whom Pirithous was king, a little before the Argonautic expedition. He had ſeveral wars with the Centaurs, another Theſſalian nation, who were ſaid to be half men, half horſes; probably from their being expert horſemen. Pirithous having called Hercules and Theſeus to his aid, nearly extirpated the Centaurs, but was himſelf ſlain ſoon after by Aidoneus, king of the Moloſſians. The Dorians, who were ſprung from Dorus, the grandſon of Deucalion, is alſo ſuppoſed by ſome to have been ſettled in a part of Theſſaly; and they afforded ſhelter to the Heraclidæ, as well as aid in the conqueſt of Peloponneſus. And all I ſhall here add of Theſſaly is, that in it was Mount Olympus, ſuppoſed by the Greeks to be the ſeat of their Gods.

Phocis was founded about the year 980, by Phocus, another ſon of Æacus, king of Ægina. There were ſeveral wars between this ſtate and the neighbouring ones of Theſſaly; but though the Phocians were weakeſt in point of numbers, they kept their own by

ſuperior ſkill and management. In this country is Mount Parnaſſus, one of whoſe forked heads was dedicated to Bacchus, and the other to Apollo. It was likewiſe conſidered as the dwelling place of the Muſes; and at its foot was the Caſtalian fountain, as alſo the ſpring of Cythæron, both ſacred to the poetic Deities.

But Phocis is chiefly famous for its oracle of Apollo. There was a deep cavern at the city of Delphos from which it iſſued, over which there was firſt a ſmall building, and then a moſt magnificent temple. A prieſteſs preſided, who was called Pythia, from Apollo having deſtroyed a great ſerpent that infeſted this place, and which was named Python. The Pythoneſſes were at firſt young virgins; but one of them having proved with child, no woman under fifty was afterwards allowed to officiate; and as it became at length a place of great profit and conſequence, theſe prieſteſſes were generally taken from one or other of the Grecian regal families.

Thoſe who conſulted the oracle, began

with preſenting ſome very valuable preſent to its temple. They then ſacrificed at the altar of Apollo; and the Pythoneſs, from inſpecting the entrails, pronounced whether the God was or was not willing to be conſulted. If he was, ſhe fixed herſelf on the tripod, a ſeat with three feet placed over the mouth of the cavern. There ſhe continued till inſpired, when in a frantic manner ſhe anſwered in Hexameter verſe. Theſe reſponſes were generally extremely ambiguous; but if we can believe the early hiſtorians, they were always accompliſhed. Before the Pythoneſs performed her office, ſhe bathed in the fountain of Caſtalius, adorning her head with laurel that grew there, and which was ſuppoſed to have a ſupernatural effect. Indeed, the oracle is ſaid to have been diſcovered by the people obſerving all animals to dance and ſkip in an extraordinary way when they approached the mouth of the cavern. At firſt the oracle only gave reſponſes one day in every year; but on its becoming highly celebrated, it allowed itſelf to be conſulted as often in each month, and immenſe treaſures

were thereby accumulated in the temple of Delphos.

Ætolia is ſo called from Ætolus, the grandſon of Ætlius, king of Elis. When Cadmus came into Greece, another body of Phœnicians took poſſeſſion of this country, and were diſtinguiſhed by the name of Curetes; but Ætolus ſubjected them and the other inhabitants about the year 1010.

He had two ſons called Pleuron and Calydon, each of whom gave their name to a city and territory. About the year 993, Pelops got footing in this country, but how far he extended his conqueſt is uncertain. A little after this Oeneus was king of Calydonia, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Meleager. Tydeus, another ſon of Oeneus, married the daughter of Adraſtus; but the ſucceſſion of kings is from this time very obſcure. Of the Ozolæans, Acarnanians, and Locrians, there is little or nothing to be ſaid; and even the names of any other petty ſtates in Greece, are ſcarcely recorded.

Epirus, which I reckon diſtinct from Greece, was firſt brought to ſome degree of

tivilization by Grecian and Phœnician colonies. About the year 987, a prieſteſs of Jupiter Ammon came here from Lybia, inſtituting an oracle at Dodona, deemed older than that at Delphos. Of the different ſtates in this country, thoſe of Aidoneus, king of the Moloſſians, and of Pyrrhus, the ſon of Achilles, are alone particularly ſpecified. How Pyrrhus got footing here is obſcure, but he tranſmitted his territories to his offspring by Andromache, who had been the wife of Hector, whom Achilles ſlew before the walls of Troy; and I ſhall only add of Epirus, that it was watered by the river Acheron.

In Thrace, Oeagrus ſucceeded his father Tharops, and tranſmitted the crown to his ſon Orpheus. Orpheus travelled into Egypt, Crete, and other countries, returning with all the knowledge that was to be acquired. He was ſkilled in muſic, particularly on the harp, and is ſaid to have wrote ſeveral poetic pieces, though none that were really his, are extant. Amongſt other opinions, the tranſmigration of the human ſoul into animals,

is aſcribed to him. He therefore abſtained from every thing that had life, feeding entirely on the fruits of the earth. By him particular forms of expiation for murder were introduced amongſt the Greeks; and till they were gone through, he who had cauſed the death of another, was avoided as a polluted perſon. Orpheus had particularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the Argonautic expedition, which, added to his ſuperior knowledge, gave him a vaſt influence in Greece. To him is aſcribed the arrangement of the Grecian religion, which he chiefly took from the Egyptian, Cretan, and other mythologies; and as it afterwards became almoſt univerſal, I ſhall here endeavour to give you a general idea of that abſurd and extraordinary ſyſtem.

Beſides Rhea, or Cybele, who was deemed the mot'er of the Gods, there were twelve others who were diſtinguiſhed as the great Deities of Greece. Theſe were Juno, Veſta, Ceres, Minerva, Diana, Venus, Jupiter, Neptune, Mars, Mercury, Vulcan, and Apollo. Then came a great number of ſecondary deities,

and after them a multitude of other beings, who were ſuperior to mortals.

The Greeks ſaid, that in the beginning was Chaos, of which Nox, or Night, was the firſt production. Next came Erebus, or darkneſs, Æther, or the Day, and Terra, or the Earth. Of Æther and Terra ſprung Cœlum, or Heaven. Cœlum then married Terra, by whom he had a numerous offſpring; and therefore Terra is ſuppoſed by ſome to be the ſame with Cybele. Saturn was one of Cœlum's ſons, who being aſſiſted by his mother Terra, caſtrated his father with a ſcythe, and throwing what he had cut off into the ſea, it produced the goddeſs Venus. Saturn then releaſed his brothers and ſiſters from a priſon wherein Cœlum had confined them, and placed his father in their ſtead.

Saturn now married his ſiſter Rhea, by whom he had three daughters, Ceres, Veſta, and Juno; and two ſons, Neptune, and Pluto: but fearful that they might ſerve him as he had done Cœlum, he devoured each on their being born. When Rhea was again with child, ſhe therefore contrived a way to

ſave her offſpring; for wrapping up a ſtone in ſwadding clothes, Saturn ſwallowed it without perceiving the cheat; and Jupiter, of whom Rhea was then delivered, was educated in concealment.

When Jupiter grew up, he enlarged his grandfather Cœlum; who, in return preſented him with the thunderbolt, which was to render Jupiter invincible. This dreadful weapon was ſaid to be forged by the Cyclops, who were ſons of the earth, and afterwards ſervants to Vulcan.

Jupiter being thus armed made war againſt Saturn, and proving victorious, he drove him to the loweſt part of the infernal regions: but he firſt made him vomit up thoſe children which he had ſwallowed; and Jupiter had the pleaſure of ſeeing his brothers and ſiſters reſtored to him without having ſuffered any injury.

Titan, a brother of Saturn, had a numerous offſpring, who now determined to revenge their uncle's misfortune. Theſe Titans were of gigantic ſtature, and each of them had fifty heads and one hundred hands.

They began with placing mount Oſſa on the top of mount Pelion, in Theſſaly, in order to ſcale Heaven; but Jupiter's thunderbolt was too powerful, and they were hurled into Tartarus.

Terra being greatly incenſed at this treatment of the Titans, produced a monſtrous giant called Typhon. His head touched the ſkies, and from his ſhoulders ſprung a hundred huge ſerpents. But his attempt was equally fruitleſs, for he alſo was driven to Tartarus. Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, then caſt loſts for their reſpective ſhares in the government of the univerſe. The firſt obtained the juriſdiction over the heavens and the earth; the ſecond had the ſea for his portion; and the latter was the monarch of the infernal regions.

Jupiter is not repreſented as meriting his power, for he began with raviſhing Themis, the daughter of Cœlum and Terra. Of her was born Aſtræa, the goddeſs of Juſtice, and Themis herſelf is ſaid to have been then metamorphoſed into the beam of thoſe ſcales which were uſed by Aſtræa. Metis, another

daughter of Cœlum and Terra, Jupiter eſpouſed; but on her proving with child, he ſwallowed her, leſt he ſhould be dethroned by her offspring. He next married his ſiſter Juno, by whom he had Mars and Vulcan. Some time after this, finding a great pain in his head, he ordered his ſon Vulcan to open it with a hatchet, when out ſprung Minerva in complete armour; ſhe being the child which Metis was big of when he ſwallowed her.

Jupiter was engaged in various intrigues. Amongſt others, he had one with Maia, the daughter of Atlas, the conſequence of which was the god Mercury. By Latona, the daughter of Phœbe, he had Apollo and Diana. Phœbe was the ſiſter of Japetus, the father of Atlas, and Japetus himſelf was reckoned the brother of Saturn.

Having thus given you the ſuppoſed origin of the great gods of Greece, I ſhall proceed to their reſpective functions; as alſo to thoſe of the interior deities. Jupiter had the ſupreme power over men and gods, and Juno was his acknowledged Queen. Mercury was

the particular meſſenger of Jupiter. He was ſkilled in all things both good and bad, and was equally ready to execute the juſt and unjuſt commands of his ſovereign. Iris, or the Rainbow; filled the ſame office to Juno, who particularly ſuperintended the affairs of married women.

Venus, the moſt beautiful of all the goddeſſes, together with her ſon Cupid, were the authors of all the paſſions between men and women, and in their train were the three Graces. Hymenæus, the ſon of Bacchus and Venus, was the god of marriage; but in happy unions Venus and Cupid always aſſiſted.

Diana was the goddeſs of Chaſtity; ſhe however approved of marriage, though her own attendants were virgins. Hunting was her favourite amuſement, and hunters were ſuppoſed to be under her protection. In heaven ſhe was called Luna, and acted in the capacity of the moon; in hell ſhe was Hecate, whoſe office I ſhall elſewhere deſcribe; and on earth ſhe retained the name of Diana.

Apollo was alſo ſuppoſed to be the ſun, and his courſe was uſhered in by Aurora, the goddeſs of the morning, and mother of the winds and ſtars. Apollo on earth was the patron of wit, eloquence, muſic, and poetry; and in his train were all the muſes. Theſe were nine in number, and had the following allotments: Clio preſided over hiſtory; Euterpe, muſic; Thalia, comedy and lyric poetry; Melpomene, tragedy; Terpſichore, muſic and dancing; Erato, poetry on love ſubjects; Polyhymnia, rhetoric; Urania, aſtronomy; and Calliope had eloquence and heroic poetry.

Minerva, or Pallas, was the goddeſs of war and wiſdom. War had alſo the goddeſs Bellona, and the god Mars to preſide over it. Ceres directed every thing relative to agriculture; and Veſta, who is ſometimes confounded with Cybele, had the care of the celeſtial fire, with which all nature is impregnated.

Vulcan was the god of ſmiths, and had the ſuperintendance of metals. Bacchus, the ſon of Semele, preſided over wine and drun-

kards. Comus at feaſts and revelry. Sleep was under the management of Somnus, the ſon of Erebus and Nox. Momus, who was ſprung from Nox and Somnus, was the governor of gibes and jeſts. Plutus had the care of riches, and is deſcribed to have been lame, blind, and timorous.

Æſculapius, the ſon of Apollo by the nymph Coronis, was the deity of health and medicine. Hebe, whom Juno conceived by eating lettuces, was the goddeſs of youth, and cup-bearer to the ſuperior deities; in which latter office ſhe was aſſiſted by Ganymede, the ſon of Tros.

Pan, the ſon of Mercury, was the principal Sylvan Deity. Next to him was Sylvanus and Faunus. The Satyrs, ſaid to be half men, half goats, and nymphs of various orders, alſo aſſiſted in rural affairs. Some of theſe nymphs were called Dryades, or Wood Nymphs; others Hamadryads, or Nymphs of particular trees. There were likewiſe Oreads, or Nymphs of Mountains; and Naiades, or Nymphs of the Rivers and Fountains.

Pomona was the goddeſs of fruits and of autumn. Vertumnus was more particularly over the ſpring; he was the lover of Pomona, and had the art of changing his appearance as often as he pleaſed. Flora had the care of flowers and of harveſt; and Priapus, the ſon of Bacchus and Venus, who was a very large and deformed creature, preſided over orchards and debauchery.

The Greeks had alſo deities for every action and paſſion: ſuch as Fortune—Fame—Victory—Fear—Death—Time—Terror—Diſcord, &c. &c. &c. Beſides theſe which were general, they likewiſe believed in demons and genii, who took care of individuals; and every houſe and city had their particular divinities, which they called their Lares and Penates. To theſe we muſt likewiſe add their demigods; ſuch as Perſeus, Hercules, Theſeus, Orpheus, Caſtor, and Pollux, and many others, whom they ſuppoſed to have great authority in Heaven. But I muſt check myſelf on this ſubject; for even to name every object of their idolatry, would take up a volume to itſelf.

The chief enjoyment of the principal deities was ſuppoſed to conſiſt in eating Ambroſia, and drinking Nectar, the moſt delicious of wines; but this was not the only pleaſure allowed them, for they were ſuppoſed to feel all the paſſions of mortals, and to yield to them without reſtraint.

Neptune, who commanded the ſea, carried a Trident, as the emblem of his power. He ran away with Amphitrite, the daughter of old Oceanus, by the help of two dolphins, and ſhe became the ſharer of his ſovereignty. Beſides the dolphins, Neptune had alſo Tritons to attend him; who, by means of certain ſhells which they blew, were ſaid to make the ſhores reſound. Nereus, the brother of Amphitrite, was next to Neptune in power; he married Doris his ſiſter, by whom he had fifty daughters, called Nereids, who were employed in carrying the commands of their monarch into execution. Æolus, the ſon of Jupiter, and god of the winds, was in ſome degree conſidered as ſubordinate to Neptune. Every wind had alſo its particular

deity, but all were under the control of Æolus.

Pluto, who governed the infernal regions, bore a ſceptre with two prongs. He ran away with Proſerpine, the daughter of Jupiter and Ceres, whom he made the partner of his throne. Hecate ſeems to have been next to him in power, and her province was the care of departed ſouls till brought to judgment. The fatal ſiſters, called the Deſtinies, had alſo their reſidence here. Clotho, who was the youngeſt, attended the birth of mortals; Lacheſis, the ſecond, ſpun the events of life; and Atropos, the eldeſt, cauſed the death of every human being, by cutting their thread with her ſciſſors: this however ſhe was not allowed to do, till Mercury delivered the orders of Jupiter as to men, and Iris from Juno as to the women.

The lower regions had ſeveral famous rivers. Styx was celebrated for being the oath of the gods, and perjury in a deity was puniſhed by the deprivation of Nectar for one thouſand years. Acheron was remarkable for having been once the ſon of Sol and Terra,

but was turned into a river by Jupiter for joining with the Titans. This water was made the boundary between the dominions of Pluto and the reſt of the univerſe; and the only way of paſſing of it was by entering a boat, of which Charon, the ſon of Erebus and Nox, was the ferryman. To him Mercury conducted the ſoul of every deceaſed mortal. If their bodies had been buried, they were inſtantly received; but, if otherwiſe, they wandered one hundred years on the banks of the black Cocytus, a river ſupplied from the waters of Styx, after which they were permitted to paſs the Acheron.

When it came to the turn of any ſoul to be judged, Cerberus, a dog with three heads, permitted it to paſs into the preſence of Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus, the judges of hell. Rhadamanthus inquired into the actions of the Africans and Aſiatics, and Æacus did the ſame by the Europeans; but both ſubmitted their opinions to Minos, whoſe judgment was concluſive.

If the ſoul was found unworthy of bliſs,

it was handed over to the furies. Theſe were infernal ſpirits, who with ſcourges of ſerpents whipped the criminal into Tartarus. This was a place of horror, ſurrounded by three inſurmountable walls. Through it ran a river of burning fire, called Phlegethon; and a variety of puniſhments were inflicted on thoſe who were ſent here: but though they varied according to the different degrees of criminality, all were ſuppoſed to be eternal.

When the ſoul was deemed worthy of happineſs, it was conducted into the Elyſian fields. Through them ran the river Lethe, whoſe waters produced a forgetfulneſs of all that was painful. Having drank of its ſtream, the happy ſpirit was indulged in the uninterrupted enjoyment of all its favourite purſuits for the ſpace of one thouſand years. It then paſſed into the dominions of old Saturn, where it was capable of ſtill higher pleaſures, and which were to continue to all eternity.

FIFTH LETTER.

YOU have before ſeen Aſterius reigning in Crete, with Europa for his queen. A number of Phœnicians had accompanied or followed her, who ſettled near mount Ida, and were diſtinguiſhed from the other Cretans, by the name of Idæi Dactyli. The knowledge of letters, together with the uſe of gold, ſilver, and braſs, was introduced by them; and not long after their arrival, they acquired the art of extracting iron, the moſt uſeful of all metals.

Europa was delivered of ſeveral children, all of whom Aſterius deſtroyed, on account of an oracle which predicted his being depoſed by one of his offspring. His queen, however, at length found means to deceive him, and Minos, a ſon which ſhe now bore, was educated in concealment amongſt her countrymen, who had ſettled near mount Ida.

By the time Minos attained to manhood, Aſterius was in danger of loſing his crown, being very unſucceſsful in a war that he had engaged in. The Idæi Dactyli in this dilemma thought it moſt prudent to reveal to Minos the ſecret of his birth; and he no ſooner knew it, than he put himſelf at the head of this Phœnician colony, and turned the ſcale in favour of his father: but Aſterius, inſtead of rejoicing in his new-found ſon, purſued his life. Thus compelled by ſelf-defence, Minos turned his arms againſt his father, and driving him from Crete, he took poſſeſſion of his throne.

Though Aſterius was the greateſt King in Crete, there were in it ſeveral other petty ſtates. Theſe Minos reduced, either by arms or policy; till at length the whole iſland was united under his juriſdiction. His laws, of which little or nothing has reached us, were in high eſtimation; and extending his views to commerce, he was ſoon poſſeſſed of the greateſt fleet which had yet belonged to any European ſtate. Many uſeful arts were alſo introduced at this time into Crete by Dæ-

dalus, an Athenian of great ingenuity, who was forced to abandon his native country; and to him is aſcribed the celebrated Cretan Labyrinth.

But all this public greatneſs could not ſave Minos from the moſt grievous domeſtic misfortunes. Paſiphae, his queen, was guilty of the vileſt luſts, and Dædalus was amongſt thoſe who adminiſtered to her paſſions. On this being diſcovered, he fled from the reſentment of Minos, who purſued him; but Dædalus had invented ſails to forward his eſcape, and the Cretan monarch having none, the Athenian made good a paſſage to Sicily. Thither Minos ſoon after arrived, and demanded Dædalus of a Sicilian King, named Cocalus, with whom he had taken ſhelter. Cocalus pretended he would comply, at the ſame time inviting the Cretan King to an entertainment, where he was treacherouſly ſlain. Such was the fate of Minos, who from his great legiſlative powers, the ancients ſuppoſed to be made the chief judge of the infernal regions; and under him, his brother Rhada-

manthus was alſo ſaid to adminiſter juſtice to the ſouls of the Africans and Aſiatics.

Deucalion, who ſucceeded his father Minos, about the year 964, was one of the Argonauts. His brother Creteus next reigned; and after him Idomeneus, the ſon of Deucalion, aſcended the throne. He was one of the Princes who warred againſt Troy, after which the Cretan ſucceſſion is not aſcertained.

The golden age is ſaid, by ſome authors, to have laſted till Saturn was expelled his kingdom. The ſilver age was under Jupiter; after which came the brazen, and laſt of all the iron; each age growing worſe and worſe, according to their ideas. Now you muſt clearly perceive the affinity between the hiſtory of Aſterius and Minos; and the Saturn and Jupiter of the Grecian Mythology. Sir Iſaac Newton, therefore, thinks, that the Idæi Dactyli, who came to Crete in the reign of Aſterius, marked that period by calling it the golden age, or generation. To Minos they applied ſilver for the ſame purpoſe; as they did brazen to Deucalion like-

wiſe; and as Cretus was cotemporary with Deucalion, they reckoned him only a part of the brazen age: but Idomeneus being the fourth generation, was recorded by the appellation of iron. Thus the Trojan war happened in the fourth age, which will agree with Heſiod, who wrote ſoon after the deſtruction of Troy, and ſays that he lived in the fifth age; from whence Sir Iſaac draws a collateral proof of the true date of the Trojan war.

Rhodes was firſt ſettled by Phorbas, a Prince of the royal family of Argos, who is ſaid to have cleared the iſland from ſerpents, with which it was over-run. Some Phœnicians and Cretans alſo ſettled there; but about the time that Pul founded his empire, Tlepolemus, a deſcendant from Hercules, arrived with a body of Dorians, and uniting all its inhabitants under his government, he laid the foundation of its future conſequence.

Ægina was remarkable for its King Æacus, who was cotemporary with Minos. He

was one of the wiſeſt Princes of thoſe days, and his three ſons, Peleus, Phocus, and Telamon, were all poſſeſſed of kingdoms. Of the firſt two you are already informed, and the latter made himſelf maſter of the iſland of Salamis. Æacus was ſuppoſed after death to be one of the judges of departed ſpirits, and all his poſterity had the general name of Æacidæ.

Salamis did not long continue in the family of Æacus, for Phybus, the great grandſon of Telamon, preferring a private life, gave the iſland to the Athenians; and he himſelf took up his abode at Athens.

Eubœa was very early colonized by a body of Egyptians. At the time of the Trojan war Nauplius was its King. His ſon Palamedes was at that celebrated ſiege, but being put to death at the inſtigation of Diomedes and Ulyſſes, Nauplius meditated a dreadful vengeance: for when the Grecian fleet was returning, he raiſed falſe fires, and many ſhips were wrecked upon his coaſts; but Ulyſſes and Diomedes eſcaping, Nauplius laid violent hands upon himſelf, and the Eu-

bœans after his death ſplit into a number of inſignificant ſtates.

Ithaca is famous for its King Ulyſſes, and his Queen Penelope. After the deſtruction of Troy, Ulyſſes was kept from his country for many years by the ſtorms which he encountered; during which time Penelope rejected numberleſs ſuitors, who came on the ſuppoſition of Ulyſſes being no more; but at length her fidelity was rewarded by the ſafe return of her Lord.

Delos was one of the moſt celebrated iſlands of the Archipelago; and Latona being ſaid to have brought forth Diana and Apollo on mount Cynthus, that hill was deemed particularly ſacred. Indeed, the whole iſland was a ſanctuary, and neither man nor beaſt could be put to death there. Its temple to Apollo was held in the higheſt eſtimation; and in it there was a gigantic ſtatue in honour of that deity.

When Theſeus ſet out for Crete, he vowed an annual offering from Athens to Delos, in caſe he ſhould prove ſucceſsful. This ceremony was accordingly kept up for ages; and

the voyage was deemed ſo holy, that from the time the ſhip which was to perform it was ready to ſail, no perſon could be put to death among the Athenians till after its return.

The Delians alſo paid a compliment to the memory of Theſeus. He had left them a ſtatue of Venus, in his way from Crete. They therefore celebrated a feſtival to that goddeſs every fifth year; in which they had dances imitating the mazes of that labyrinth, from which Ariadne had enabled her lover to eſcape.

Samothrace was alſo famous for its religious rites. The nature of them is not well aſcertained; but Ceres, Proſerpine, and Pluto are ſuppoſed to have been its chief deities. The gods of this iſland were in ſuch high repute, that no oath was deemed ſo ſacred, as that which was ſworn by them; and all the heroes and principal youths of Greece, deemed it abſolutely neceſſary to be initiated into the Samothracian myſteries. Imbros had nearly the ſame ceremonies; and both countries were deemed ſo holy, as to afford aſylums to every offender.

Of the other Greek and Aſiatic iſlands there is nothing intereſting or entertaining. The iſlands of Majorca, Minorca, Sardinia, Ivica, and thoſe in that quarter, were very early viſited by the Phœnicians, and probably in a great meaſure colonized by them. Of the Madeira, Canary, and Britiſh iſles, we are as yet equally ignorant. As to Thule, it is even doubted what country it means; ſome make it Iceland, Shetland, or the north of Scotland; whilſt others ſuppoſe it to be Ireland. The ancients alſo talk of an iſland named Atlantis, that was as big as Europe, Aſia, and Africa, and which ſunk in the ſea; but of what was meant by ſuch a deſcription, I cannot even form a conjecture.

Sicily was probably pretty ſoon inhabited; but the firſt colony that is well aſcertained, was the Siculi, who came from Italy. Not long after this Seſoſtris planted the Sicani there, and Cocalus, who put Minos to death, was their king. After that tranſaction the Cretans, not chooſing to return, built a city which they called Minoa. Aceſtes, a Phry-

gian Prince, alſo planted a colony there before the Trojan war; and it is likely many other ſettlements were made in this fertile iſland, prior to the days of Pul: but we are certain no powerful ſtate was formed there till after that period. The volcano from Ætna is noticed by the earlieſt prophane authors, and it was ſuppoſed to be the habitation of Vulcan and his Cyclops.

In my firſt æra you have ſeen Œnotrus ſettling in Italy, on the banks of the Tiber. With him Aſterius took ſhelter, when driven from Crete, and many new inventions were by this means introduced into Italy. Aſterius was therefore highly honoured, as well as Œnotrus; and as the latter was deified by the name of Janus, a ſimilar compliment was paid to the former, by the appellation of Saturn.

The ſucceſſion of Kings is obſcure; but about the year 943, the ſupreme power was in the hands of Faunus. At this time Evander, the ſon of Echemus, King of Arcadia, and his mother Carmenta, for ſome reaſon or other, paſſed over into Italy, and ſettled

in this territory. They brought with them the uſe and knowledge of letters; and Carmenta was ſuppoſed to be inſpired by Apollo, whoſe oracles ſhe delivered in verſe.

Latinus, the ſucceſſor of Faunus, was engaged in a war with a neighbouring ſtate, called the Rutuli; when Æneas, about the year 900, arrived at the mouth of the Tiber. At firſt Latinus thought of oppoſing him; but on more mature deliberation, he offered him a ſettlement, provided he would aid him againſt the Rutuli. With this Æneas immemediately cloſed, and the war was ſoon decided in favour of Latinus. In return, he gave his daughter Lavinia to Æneas, and being his only child, the kingdom was in the end to be her portion. In conſequence of this union, the other Trojans alſo intermarried with the ſubjects of Latinus, from him called Latines; and in a ſhort time a perfect blenditure took place between theſe different nations.

Turnus, the nephew of Latinus, having expected Lavinia and the crown, could but ill brook this double diſappointment. He there-

fore joined the Rutuli, ſtirring them up to a new conteſt. In it both Turnus and Latinus periſhed; but the Rutuli were defeated, and Æneas ſucceeded to the throne of his father-in-law.

He now built a city, which in honour of his wife he named Lavinium. In it he placed the Trojan deities; and particularly a ſtatue to Minerva, called the Palladium. This he had brought from Troy, when he and his followers eſcaped from its deſtruction, and it was deemed peculiarly holy. But Æneas did not long ſurvive his good fortune, for being ſoon after engaged in a war with the Tyrrhenians, he was drowned in a river during an action that enſued.

Aſcanius, who is called Iulus, ſucceeded to the crown of his father Æneas. He was the offspring of Creuſa, a former wife, who loſt her life at the deſtruction of Troy; and Lavinia, doubtful of his conduct, fled immediately with her young ſon Æneas Silvius. But Aſcanius ſoon convinced her that her fears were groundleſs, by giving up the city of Lavinium and the territory around it; on

which he raiſed a new city for himſelf, called Alba Longa.

At the death of Aſcanius, both cities united under the government of Æneas Silvius; but Aſcanius having left a ſon, named Iulus, the High Prieſthood was conferred on him and his poſterity. Alba, Capetus, and Tiberinus, the deſcendants of Silvius, then ſucceſſively held the ſceptre, and it was about the reign of the latter that Pul founded his empire.

Though Italy had at this time a number of little ſtates, the Hetrurians, or Etrurians, alone deſerve notice. They were divided into twelve cities or diſtricts, called Leucumonies, and each had a Prince, or Leucumo. In caſes of danger all united, appointing one of theſe Leucumones to command the whole for that occaſion. In him was veſted the ſupreme power, twelve men, called Lictors, carrying as many bundles of ſticks before him, as the emblem of his office; and this, with many more of their cuſtoms, was afterwards adopted by the Romans.

Having thus given you a conciſe account of

all that I think neceſſary prior to the year 790, I ſhall, in my next, ſubmit to you a few obſervations on this period of hiſtory.

SIXTH LETTER.

THE great hinges on which early Chronology turns, are the reigns of Bacchus, Seſoſtris, and Seſac over Egypt—the Argonautic expedition—the Trojan war—and the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponneſus. Now Sir Iſaac Newton conceives, that theſe three Egyptian Kings were, in fact, but one perſon; and if this can be aſcertained, a great foundation will be laid for explaining ſome of the obſcureſt periods in hiſtory.

That Seſoſtris and Bacchus were one and the ſame, will appear from a few facts admitted by all hiſtorians. The Egyptian Bacchus married, or kept, Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, King of Crete. Now ſhe was forſaken by Theſeus, when he was a youth; and from different circumſtances mentioned by Sir Iſaac, Theſeus could not have been leſs than fifty years old at the time of the Argo-

nautic expedition: It therefore follows, that the Egyptian Bacchus muſt have lived, at leaſt, thirty years prior to the time of that voyage.

Seſoſtris placed his nephew Prometheus at mount Caucaſus, where it is allowed he remained thirty years before he was relieved by Hercules. His releaſe happened when the Argonauts were on their adventure; and Æetes, who had been placed at Colchis by the ſame King, was then alive; conſequently, Seſoſtris muſt have lived ſomewhat about thirty years before that memorable undertaking.

But Egypt is deſcribed as a great and united kingdom under both theſe Princes. Both are recorded for long and glorious reigns, and are painted as amazing conquerors, with very little difference as to the countries which they ſubdued. It is, therefore, ſays Sir Iſaac, impoſſible that they ſhould be diſtinct men; and in his opinion the miſtake aroſe, from the different appellations which were given to Seſoſtris, by the countries that yielded to his arms.

Seſoſtris and Bacchus being the ſame, let us ſee who was Seſac. Rehoboam, King of Judah, began his reign exactly 979 years before Chriſt. It was in the fifth year of his reign that Seſac made himſelf maſter of Jeruſalem; and the Bible admits of no earlier Egyptian invaſion. If, therefore, it can be proved, that the Argonautic voyage happened between thirty and forty years after this ſubjection of the Jews, it will place Seſac at the very ſame period, in which it is already proved Seſoſtris and Bacchus muſt have reigned; and this invaſion of Judea alſo agrees exactly with the progreſs aſcribed to thoſe heroes in their conqueſt of Aſia.

Sir Iſaac, by a variety of calculations, fixes the Argonautic expedition in the year 937. But to his accounts, which are taken from the generations of different families, and which can hardly be erroneous, he adds a proof, which appears to me the ſtrongeſt and moſt incontrovertible that can be given of a period ſo remote and ſo obſcured by fable.

The firſt ſphere or delineation of the heavenly bodies had no name for a ſtar or con-

ſtellation, which did not allude to the perſons or tranſactions of the Argonauts, or to things antecedent to them. Sir Iſaac, therefore, concludes it was made at that time, and for that very occaſion. For if it had been later, ſome of the ſtars would no doubt have taken their names from ſomething ſubſequent thereto; and if earlier, the events or perſons of that voyage could not have been introduced.

By this firſt ſphere, the ſun is repreſented in a courſe through the conſtellations, which Sir Iſaac deſcribes; and as from what is called the equation of the ſun, it varies a degree in every ſeventy-two years, Sir Iſaac calculated to what year its ſituation, in the firſt ſphere, would anſwer, and he found it to be the year 937. Thus wonderfully does he eſtabliſh the true date of that event; and, conſequently, that Bacchus, Seſoſtris, and Seſac, were only different names for one and the ſame conqueror.

Having aſcertained this memorable æra, the time of Troy being taken will eaſily follow. Many children of the Argonauts were at that ſiege, and Helen, the ſiſter of Caſtor and Pol-

lux, was the cauſe of that war. It, therefore, happened about one generation later; and Sir Iſaac cannot be far, if at all wrong, in fixing it about the year 904. This alſo aſcertains the period when Æneas went into Italy, and the reign of Dido at Carthage, together with cotemporary events.

In ſupport of this being the true date of the Trojan war, Sir Iſaac alſo draws a concluſion from ſome expreſſions in Heſiod. That author lived in the generation next after Troy was deſtroyed, and ſays, on one occaſion, that the ſtar Arcturus, in his time, roſe juſt at ſunſet, ſixty days after the winter ſolſtice, and Sir Iſaac, on trying back, finds that it did ſo about the year 879.

From the Argonautic expedition, we can alſo trace the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponneſus. Hercules was an Argonaut, and it was the fourth generation from him that accompliſhed that return. Generations of eldeſt ſons, which was the caſe in this inſtance, are found to be longer than that of Kings; for the brothers of Kings do ſometimes ſucceed, and revolutions do likewiſe

happen. From eighteen to twenty years is, therefore, found to be the medium for the laſt; whilſt the former is averaged at twenty-ſix or twenty-ſeven years. And, according to this calculation, Sir Iſaac places the return of the Heraclidæ about the year 825.

When I firſt took up Sir Iſaac's Chronology, it appeared to me very difficult to comprehend; but when I conſidered all the material events of early hiſtory, and found them not only correſpond, but to be alſo confirmed by the deſcents and intermarriages of the greateſt families of antiquity, I became ſatisfied, that it was at leaſt near the truth; and I contemplated, with wonder, the abilities of that man, by whom ſuch confuſed ideas had been reduced to order.

In regard to the fables I have touched on, there is little doubt but they relate to real facts, though painted ſo greatly out of nature. But the true uſe of Univerſal Hiſtory, is a knowledge of men and manners; and to be able to trace, age after age, the progreſs of arts, ſociety, and nations. By ſuch a view, you will likewiſe be able to ſatisfy your-

ſelf of what credit is due to thoſe authors, who give exiſtence to nations totally incompatible with the Sacred Writings. If, indeed, as ſome daring unbelievers have aſſerted, ſuch things could be made appear, it would ſhake the authority of Scripture; but the fact is far otherwiſe. See how the firſt nations of the earth agree with Noah's flood, and the diſperſion of the people in the plains of Shinaar? In the year 790, how well do the then exiſting kingdoms correſpond to the natural progreſs of mankind after their ſeparation? and, as we proceed, you will ſee other ſtates ariſing according to the ſame order.

I ſhall now point out to you the ſtate of the arts and ſciences during this æra. The firſt knowledge of letters, aſtronomy, and navigation, ſeems to have ariſen among the Edomites. On their diſperſion by David, they carried theſe different things into the countries where they took refuge. The Egyptians and Babylonians particularly improved on aſtronomy; and the Greeks were alſo able to delineate the ſituation of the heavenly bo-

dies: but all calculations of eclipſes, and all juſt notions of the ſhape and motion of the earth, were totally unknown.

The firſt introduction of ſails ſeems to belong to the Egyptians; but the Phœnicians very ſoon took the lead, not only of them, but of the whole world in naval affairs. They alſo excelled all others in manufactures and metals. Architecture was likewiſe getting forward, in conſequence of their diſcovery of iron. But ſtill theſe things were in a very humble ſtate when Pul began his empire.

In phyſic, Chiron had a conſiderable knowledge as to the cure of wounds, and was well acquainted with ſimples. Æſculapius, his diſciple, excelled him, and left two ſons, named Machaon and Podalirius, the firſt of whom was famous in ſurgery, and the latter became well acquainted with phyſic.

As to letters, the progreſs muſt as yet have been very ſlow; for there was not one ſingle proſe writer among the heathens prior to the year 790. It has indeed been alleged, that Sanchoniathon wrote before that period; but

in my next æra, I ſhall ſhow you where Sir Iſaac has more correctly placed him. Poetry, as is uſual with every infant ſtate, was yet the language of the world; and even of thoſe productions, the works of Homer and Heſiod, who flouriſhed ſoon after the Trojan war, alone have reached us.

I ſhall next call your attention to the ſtate of religion, and ſee how it alſo accords with Scripture. Abraham was particularly choſen by the Supreme Being to give riſe to a nation that ſhould revere his name. The deſcendants of Abraham for ſome centuries were without power; but at length they drove out the Canaanites, and took poſſeſſion of the promiſed land. The Egyptians, amongſt whom they remained for a long time, were idolaters. The Phœnicians, Syrians, and every other nation, except the Iſraelites, were idolaters. How then are we to account for this ſingularity in the poſterity of Jacob? For though they ſometimes fell into the abominations of their neighbours, yet they as conſtantly returned to the belief of only one great and inviſible God. No other nation

under Heaven had any juſt idea of the Deity. This is no idle ſpeculation; but a truth admitted by every hiſtorian. How then can you conceive it even poſſible, that the Iſraelites ſhould have been thus ſingular without a divine interference? But in every thing the Sacred Writ is confirmed by the prophane.

Thus, my dear ſon, do I wiſh to accompany a knowledge of the world with thoſe ſublime truths which lead to an hereafter. I want you to take in one great and comprehenſive view of this terreſtrial wonder. Without it, all muſt ſeem to be in confuſion; whilſt with it, every thing will appear to be in order. Every nation—every art and improvement—and every great event—are only movements of one immenſe ſyſtem; and that ſyſtem is leading to an Eternity, in which all who are capable of it will be for ever happy.

END OF SECOND ÆRA.

THIRD ÆRA

OF

Univerſal Hiſtory.

Commencing with the Year 790, and ending in the Year 536, when Cyrus founded the Medo-Perſian Empire.

FIRST LETTER.

MENAHEM reigned over the ten tribes of Iſrael, of which Samaria was now the capital, when Pul founded his empire. He was obliged to purchaſe peace of that Aſſyrian conqueror, at the expence of one thouſand ſhekels of ſilver. But this proved a very temporary reſpite, for Tiglath-Pileſer, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Pul, attacked Pekah, King of Iſrael, and carried away the tribes

of Reuben and Gad, together with the half tribe of Manaſſeh. Theſe had got for their inheritance, that part of the promiſed land beyond Jordan, which was afterwards called Galilee, of the Gentiles; and the Aſſyrian monarch having removed them into his own territories, brought other inhabitants to their depopulated country.

This was only a forerunner to ſtill greater misfortunes. Shalmanezer, the next Aſſyrian King, ſubjected the remainder of the ten tribes; and finding Hoſhea, their tributary Prince, plotting with So, King of Egypt, he annihilated the kingdom, carrying away moſt of its inhabitants to Halah, Habor by the river of Gozan, and into the cities of the Medes. Aſſerhadon, the ſucceſſor of Shalmanezer, completed its deſtruction, by removing the few that remained; and in their ſtead, a variety of idolaters were introduced. This happened in the year 721, and 258 years ſubſequent to the death of Solomon.

The new comers were infeſted by a number of lions, which they imputed to their

ignorance of the god who preſided in Samaria. They, therefore, entreated the Aſſyrian monarch, that he ſhould ſend them a few of the Iſraelitiſh prieſts to inſtruct them in the neceſſary worſhip. This being granted, they obtained ſome knowledge of the true God; but they blended it with their own idolatrous notions, and the Samaritans never were practiſers of the true Moſaic inſtitutions.

The kingdom of Judah, not being ſo abominably wicked as that of Iſrael, was permitted to be of longer duration. When Pekah reigned in Iſrael, Ahaz poſſeſſed the Jewiſh ſceptre. He was attacked by the combined forces of Iſrael and Syria; whereupon he ſent all the wealth of the temple to purchaſe the aid of Tiglath-Pileſer, who, for the preſent, averted the danger that threatened Judea, by defeating its enemies.

Hezekiah, the ſucceſſor of Ahaz, found it neceſſary to bribe Sennacherib, who then ſat on the Aſſyrian throne, to deſiſt from invading Judea. But it was only for a ſhort time, and Jeruſalem was ſoon after ſurrounded by an Aſſyrian army. Its ſucceſs appeared ine-

vitable, when Iſaiah, the prophet, predicted the attempt would be defeated. It was ſo, by means of a miraculous death, which deſtroyed the moſt of the beſiegers; and Sennacherib made a haſty retreat with what remained.

Hezekiah was a virtuous Prince, but Manaſſeh, his ſon, began his reign with idolatry and blood. The Aſſyrians now attacked Judea with ſucceſs, and carried the King into captivity. This apparent misfortune, however, proved a bleſſing to Manaſſeh; for being reſtored to liberty, he became a good Prince and utterly aboliſhed Idolatry.

His ſon Amon had a ſhort and wicked reign, after which Joſiah poſſeſſed the crown. As far as is in the power of a King, he ſuppreſſed wickedneſs and encouraged virtue; but he at length was mortally wounded by Pharoah Nechoh, King of Egypt, and his brother Jehoiakim, was made tributary King of Judea.

Nebuchadnezzar at this time made war on Pharoah, and having driven him from all his

conqueſts, he not only obliged Jehoiakim to change maſters, but plundered Jeruſalem, and carried away a number of its inhabitants. Jehoiakim ſurvived this about eight years, and was ſucceeded by his brother Zedekiah. He attempted to ſhake off the yoke, on which Nebuchadnezzar depoſed him, and put out his eyes. Nebuchadnezzar alſo deſpoiled Jeruſalem of all its wealth; its temple and fortifications were utterly deſtroyed; and almoſt the whole nation was removed to the province of Babylon.

A few of the very loweſt order were left to till the land; but as ſoon as the Babyloniſh forces had retired, they put Godaliah, their governor, to death, and then fled into Egypt and other countries. It was in the year 588, that this Babyloniſh captivity took place; and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were not permitted to return till Cyrus founded the Medo-Perſian empire.

About the year 790, Pul, the Prince of Nineveh, ſubjected all the petty ſtates which ſurrounded him, and took the title of King of Aſſyria. He then extended his arms over

Babylonia, Media, Perſia, and other countries, raiſing the firſt great and powerful empire that had ever been in that quarter. On his death, it, however, became divided; Babylonia being left to his ſecond ſon, Nabonaſſar, whilſt the reſt of his dominions deſcended to the eldeſt, whoſe name was Tiglath-Pileſer.

It was in the year 747, that Nabonaſſar thus became the King of Babylon; and his acceſſion gave riſe to a remarkable æra called after him. He greatly improved his capital, ſurrounding it with vaſt walls, and erecting a magnificent temple to his father Pul, whom he deified by the name of Belus. But his Queen, who ſurvived him, added ſtill more to the grandeur of Babylon; and Sir Iſaac Newton thinks that he was the Ninus, and ſhe the Semiramis of antiquity. There were two or three reigns after theirs, and then this kingdom was again added to that of Aſſyria.

Tiglath-Pileſer united Syria to the territories left him by his father; and Shalmanezer, his ſon, not only conquered Iſrael,

but alſo Phœnicia, Tyre alone excepted. Sennacherib, the next Aſſyrian King, after his retreat from the ſiege of Jeruſalem, was ſlain by two of his own ſons, whilſt ſacrificing to one of his idols; whereupon Aſſerhadon, another of his children, ſucceeded to the crown; and it was in his reign that Babylon was re-united to the empire founded by Pul.

Media had ſucceſsfully revolted in the times of Sennacherib, under the conduct of Dejoces, who became its ſovereign; nor was it ever afterwards ſubjected by Aſſyria. But notwithſtanding this, Aſſerhadon raiſed the empire to its ſummit. Egypt, Ethiopia, and Meſopotamia, ſubmitted to his arms; and beſides theſe countries, Babylonia, Perſia, Syria, Phœnicia, Iberia, Colchis, the two Armenias, Samaria, and parts of Pontus, Cappadocia, and Arabia, at this time acknowledged the Aſſyrian power.

About the year 666, Saoſduchinus ſucceeded Aſſerhadon. He was a weak and effeminate Prince, which the diſtant provinces perceiving, they revolted; and Chiniladon,

the ſon and ſucceſſor of Saoſduchinus, in vain attempted to reduce them to their former ſervitude. To add to his misfortunes, Nabopolaſſar, the governor of Babylon, alſo aſſerted independency: And Sarac, the ſon of Chiniladon, at his acceſſion, poſſeſſed very little more than Aſſyria itſelf.

As Media was materially concerned in the deſtruction of Aſſyria, I ſhall briefly relate what happened to that country. Phraortes, the ſucceſſor of Dejoces, fell in battle with the Aſſyrians, about the year 636, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Aſtyages. His reign was afflicted by an incurſion of the Scythians, under Madyes their King. They alſo penetrated into Syria and Phœnicia, but they fixed their reſidence in Media; and Aſtyages thought it better to temporize, than openly oppoſe them. Cyaxares, the ſon of Aſtyages, was the next Median King, coming to the throne much about the time that Sarac ſucceeded Chiniladon. By him the Scythian Chiefs were treacherouſly ſlain, at a feaſt to which he invited them; and their followers were either put to death, or reduced to ſla-

very. Having thus got rid of his dangerous neighbours, he confederated with Nabopolaſſar the uſurper of Babylon, whoſe ſon, Nebuchadnezzar, thereupon married Amytæ, the ſiſter of Cyaxares. Thus united, they reſolved to attack Aſſyria, and Nebuchadnezzar at the head of his father's forces, entered the kingdom of Sarac, in conjunction with the Median monarch.

Sarac, or Sardanapalus, was ſo weak in his capacity, and ſo effeminate in his manners, that he did not even attempt to make head againſt ſo formidable a combination. It was his boaſt, that he had never ſpent one day but in the indulgence of his appetites. True to this doctrine, he continued in ſuch gratifications till the enemy was at his gates; when, in a fit of deſpair, he ſet fire to his palace, and periſhed in its flames. The city of Nineveh was at the ſame time conſumed, and all Aſſyria now ſubmitted to the conquerors.

The empire founded by Pul was thus overthrown about the year 607, and at the ſame time Pharaoh Nechoh, King of Egypt, was ravaging all the countries which lay between

the Euphrates and the Nile. But his victories had no permanent conſequences; for Sarac was no ſooner ſubdued, than Cyaxares and Nebuchadnezzar forced Nechoh to retire within his former boundary.

Armenia, Pontus, Cappadocia, and parts of Aſſyria and Perſia, were now allotted to Cyaxares, as his ſhare of the ſpoil. The reſt of Pul's empire was to belong to Nebuchadnezzar, who had ſucceeded his father. He had, however, to enforce his title to the greateſt part by the ſword: but proving ſucceſsful, Syria, Phœnicia, Judea, Arabia, Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia acknowledged his juriſdiction; and after theſe conqueſts, he returned to Babylon loaded with riches.

This celebrated city now attained the ſummit of its grandeur. He raiſed a new palace, far more magnificent than the former. The walls were made more extenſive, forming a ſquare of fifteen miles to every ſide, and they were two hundred cubits high, and fifty in breadth. But nothing can prove the immenſe wealth of Nebuchadnezzar more than the golden image which he erected. It is

ſaid to have been ninety cubits high, and to have been worth three millions of our money; and if ſo much was expended on one object, it is no wonder that Babylon ſhould have been ſuperior to every other city.

As the Median and Babyloniſh empires were at this time cotemporary, it is neceſſary to treat of them together. About the year 590, Cyaxares had a war with Lydia, which terminated by a great eclipſe of the ſun; for both armies being ready to engage, they were ſo terrified that a truce was inſtantly agreed on; and to render their friendſhip permanent, Ariene, the daughter of Alyattes, King of Lydia, was given in marriage to Darius, the ſon of Cyaxares.

This eclipſe had been foretold by Thales, a Greek of Aſia-Minor, who flouriſhed at this time, and who was the firſt celebrated Mathematician and Aſtronomer. It happened on the 28th day of May 585, ſo that we know to a certainty the time of this peace, and its cotemporary events. Cyaxares ſurvived it about fourteen years, and his ſon

Darius, by ſome called Cyaxares alſo, ſucceeded to the Median throne.

It was not long after the captivity of the Jews, that Nebuchadnezzar had his firſt remarkable dream; which the Prophet Daniel not only brought back to his recollection, but likewiſe gave him the interpretation thereof. Struck with aſtoniſhment at Daniel's relating what he had forgotten, he inſtantly exclaimed that his was the true God; and the Prophet was raiſed to the higheſt honours in the Babyloniſh empire.

Nebuchadnezzar having another dream that terrified him, Daniel explained it to be, that he ſhould be driven from his throne, and be fed with the beaſts of the field, and wet with the dew of heaven, till ſeven times, or years, ſhould paſs over him, in order that he might know and acknowledge the power of God. He accordingly fled from ſociety, living in the fields for the appointed time; after which his ſenſes returned, and he reaſſumed the government.

During the diſtraction of Nebuchadnezzar, his ſon Evilmerodach exerciſed the ſupreme

power, and by hunting in the territories of Media without permiſſion, he involved himſelf in a war with that country. Cyrus, the ſon of Mandane, who was ſiſter to Cyaxares, at this time happened to be at the Median court. He was therefore ſent to chaſtiſe this intruder; and he not only did ſo, but diſplayed thoſe military talents, for which he was afterwards ſo conſpicuous.

On Nebuchadnezzar's reſtoration, he threw Evilmerodach into priſon, and brought about a perfect reconciliation with the Medes. He, however, ſurvived it but a very ſhort time, and dying about the year 560, Evilmerodach re-aſſumed the ſceptre.

A daughter of Nebuchadnezzar was married to a nobleman called Nerigliſſar, who had Evilmerodach cut off in a year or two after his acceſſion; on which Laboſardachus, the ſon of Nerigliſſar, was proclaimed King. This was greatly reſented by Belſhazzar, another ſon of Nebuchadnezzar; who at length put his nephew to death, and made himſelf maſter of the diadem.

After reigning ſeveral years, Belſhazzar was

involved in a war with Darius, King of Media; and he called to his aid Crœſus, the monarch of Lydia. Cyrus commanded the Median forces, and being by the father's ſide a Perſian, a number of that people were alſo enrolled under him. The two armies met at Thymbra, where Belſhazzar and his ally received a total overthrow; after which Crœſus retired to Lydia, and Belſhazzar ſhut himſelf up in what he deemed his impregnable city of Babylon.

The uſe Cyrus firſt made of this victory was to ſubject the neighbouring provinces. He then directed his arms againſt Lydia, which he ſubdued. After this he inveſted the city of Babylon, where he was joined by Darius, who had hitherto remained inactive in the capital of Media.

Belſhazzar was a weak and voluptuous Prince; but his mother, Nitocris, in whom he greatly confided, was a woman of uncommon capacity. On the approach of danger, ſhe laid up vaſt ſtores of every kind, and ſtrengthened the fortifications of Babylon; inſomuch that Cyrus, after beſieging it for

two years, was on the point of withdrawing his forces, when an expedient was hit on which terminated in ſucceſs.

The Euphrates runs through Babylon, and Cyrus now began a great trench from that part of the river which was below the city. This he continued round the walls on one ſide of the Euphrates, till he brought it cloſe to the courſe of that river before it entered Babylon. So little did the Babylonians ſuſpect the real deſign of Cyrus, that they allowed him to proceed without interruption. The very day before the city was taken, Belſhazzar was feaſting and drinking out of thoſe veſſels of gold and ſilver which Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jeruſalem. It was then that the miraculous hand writing on the wall, and which none could interpret, alarmed the monarch. The queen-mother at length recollected the former interpretations of Daniel, who being called in, declared, that the writing expreſſed, that the King was weighed in the ſcales and found wanting, and that the kingdom ſhould depart from him. God had already raiſed the inſtruments

that ſhould accompliſh this prediction; and that very night the courſe of the Euphrates being turned into the trench which was prepared, the old channel became nearly dry, and the city was taken by ſurpriſe. This event happened in the year 538, and Darius, who was about the age of ſixty-two, thereupon poſſeſſed himſelf of the Babyloniſh empire.

Perſia had been for a long time governed by a ſatrap, though Cyrus, by his father Cambyſes, was of its royal blood. By his courage and conduct he had rendered himſelf highly agreeable to the officers and ſoldiers who had aſſiſted in his conqueſts; and he now plotted to reſcue his country from ſervitude, at the ſame time intending to raiſe himſelf to empire. This he managed ſo effectually, that on his revolting, the troops ordered againſt him deſerted to his ſtandard. Darius then entered the field in perſon, but was defeated and taken priſoner; on which the Medes moſt readily acknowledged Cyrus for their King, his mother being of their royal blood; and thus in the year 536 this great

man laid the foundation of the Medo-Perſian empire. Of Perſia itſelf I ſhall only in this place obſerve, that Beroſus, a native of it, wrote ſome things in proſe during this æra of the world.

The government of both Aſſyria and Babylon was abſolute monarchy. There were three chief officers next in dignity to the King; theſe were the Captain of the guards, the Prince of the eunuchs, and the Prime Miniſter. The firſt executed the commands of the ſovereign; the ſecond educated the youth of the palace; and the third adminiſtered juſtice, and ſuperintended the accounts of the provinces. Beſides theſe, the chief of the magicians was high in repute, being always at hand to interpret the King's dreams, and to explain other prognoſtics; for necromancy and ſorcery were in great credit with theſe people.

One of their moſt abominable cuſtoms was, that every woman once in her life proſtituted herſelf at the temple of Venus. For this ſhe was paid, and the profits went to the prieſthood of that deity; but after this a

breach of chaſtity was highly criminal. At a certain age every female was brought to a public place, where an officer preſided. When all who were then to come had aſſembled, the moſt beautiful were put to ſale, and given in marriage to thoſe who propoſed moſt for them. The women, for whom no money was bid, were then offered to any who would take them; and thoſe who remained, were portioned with the produce of ſuch as had poſſeſſed ſuperior charms. Another ſingular practice was, that during five days in every year, the ſervants in every family acted as maſters, and the real maſters were for that time bound to obedience.

Beſides adoring the ſun, moon, and ſtars, they worſhipped various other deities, and even animals. Venus was repreſented as of both ſexes, and the men attended her rites in female apparel, whilſt women on theſe occaſions appeared in the garbs of the males. To two of their idols, called Adramelech and Anamelech, they ſacrificed children. Belus was their chief idol, and in the upper part of his temple there was a magnificent

chamber, where a woman always ſlept at night, who was ſaid to be the companion of the inviſible God. In the latter days of theſe empires, the prieſts were uncommonly profligate: Indeed ſo were the whole people, for the vaſt treaſures brought home by their conquering monarchs had entirely corrupted them; and, as is ever the caſe, their luxuries led the way to their deſtruction. The Chaldeans, or Babylonians, were great Aſtronomers, and they ſeem to be the firſt who brought different inſtruments of muſic to any degree of perfection.

SECOND LETTER.

ABOUT the time Pul founded his empire, ſeveral new ſtates were riſing in Aſia-Minor. A colony of Rhodians ſettled in a part of what was afterwards called Caria. The deſcendants of Æolus, the ſon of Deucalion, founded twelve cities, which went under the general name of Æolia. Ionia, which had the ſame number of cities, was founded under

the conduct of Codrus's ſons. Each of theſe towns had its internal government; but a council, called the Panionium, compoſed of deputies from the twelve Ionian cities, regulated the general concerns of their particular ſtate. Six other cities were built by the Dorians; and what elſe relates to theſe Greek ſettlements will fall in with the Lydian hiſtory.

In Phrygia Major, Anchorus, one of its Kings, is memorable for voluntarily plunging into a gulph that threatened deſtruction to the city of Celænæ. This he did in conſequence of an oracle, and the chaſm immediately cloſed. Midas was King of this country when Andyes reigned in Lydia, and deſtroyed himſelf by drinking bullock's blood, being driven to deſpair by the Cimmerians over-running his kingdom; ſoon after which it was conquered by Lydia, as was alſo Lyſia and Myſia.

Of the early Lydian hiſtory all is obſcure, and the firſt King that affords any thing for the hiſtorian was Candaules, who reigned about the year 627. He had a favourite

called Gyges, to whom he often praiſed the hidden charms of his queen; and to prove the truth of his aſſertions, he placed his miniſter where he ſhould behold her whilſt bathing. She, by ſome means, diſcovered this tranſaction, and Gyges, at her inſtigation, killed Candaules, at the ſame time poſſeſſing himſelf both of the queen and ſovereignty. At firſt the people flew to arms; but they were appeaſed by Gyges's offering to ſubmit to whatever the Delphic oracle ſhould order: and its reſponſe being favourable to him, they quietly ſubmitted to his government.

In the reign of Andyes, his ſon and ſucceſſor, Lydia was invaded by the Cimmerians. Theſe people were ſprung from Gomer, the ſon of Japhet, and reſided in the North of Europe; but for ſome reaſon or other, a body of them now over-ran Aſia-Minor. Andyes, unable to oppoſe them, abandoned his country to theſe Barbarians, ſhutting himſelf up in Sardes, his capital. The city alſo was taken, but he ſaved himſelf in the citadel, which they were not able to

reduce; and the Cimmerians, who had no intention of any permanent ſettlement, in a ſhort time evacuated Lydia and the reſt of Aſia.

Sadyattes was the next monarch of Lydia, after whom reigned Alyattes, and then Crœſus. This laſt Prince was poſſeſſed of great courage and abilities, together with an unbounded ambition. All the countries of Aſia-Minor ſubmitted to his arms; but to the Greek cities he allowed their own laws and privileges, on condition that they ſhould ſupply him with certain quotas of ſhips, men, and money; and by theſe ſucceſſes and regulations he amaſſed ſo much wealth as to become proverbial.

About the year 550, he was in the height of his proſperity. At this time Solon, the Athenian lawgiver, paid a viſit to Sardes; and Crœſus not only diſplayed to him his vaſt riches, but alſo recounted the great reſources of his empire. He then aſked him, who was the happieſt amongſt men? not doubting but he would anſwer —— Crœſus.

Solon, however, replied, that in his opinion it was Tellus, a virtuous Athenian, who after a long and proſperous life, expired on the field of battle, having firſt vanquiſhed the enemies of his country. This was no little diſappointment to Crœſus, and he demanded, whom he thought the next happieſt? when the Philoſopher declared it to be Cleobis and Biton. Theſe were two Argives, ſons to the Prieſteſs of Juno, who, on one occaſion, drew their mother to the temple, when the oxen belonging to her chariot were not ready. The Prieſteſs, in return, prayed to the Goddeſs, that their piety ſhould be rewarded; and the youths were immediately ſeized with a deep ſleep and expired. Crœſus could no longer contain his diſpleaſure, and he treated Solon with the greateſt contempt. But the wiſe Athenian contented himſelf with obſerving, that no man could be poſitively ſaid to have had a happy life, till death had rendered a reverſe of fortune impoſſible. And Crœſus was very ſoon to feel the juſtice of the obſervation.

Not long after this, Crœſus was afflicted

by the loſs of a favourite ſon; but it was from Cyrus that he was to receive a bitter chaſtiſement. After his defeat at Thymbra, he retreated to Sardes, where he entertained ſome very gloomy ideas in regard to his future ſituation. He therefore conſulted the Delphic oracle; whoſe reply was, that he ſhould put an end to a great empire, if he paſſed the river Halys.—This might however be the Lydian; and in order to clear that matter up, he ſent a ſecond time to Delphos. He was now told, that the Lydian empire ſhould ſtand till the Medes were led by a mule.—Deeming this impoſſible, he reſolved to meet Cyrus, who was approaching; and paſſing the Halys, a battle was the conſequence. It was not deciſive, but Crœſus thought proper to return to Sardes. He was ſoon followed by Cyrus, when a ſecond engagement happened in the plains before his capital; and the Lydians being totally defeated, the city was taken by ſtorm. In the ſlaughter that enſued, Crœſus himſelf was on the point of falling by the hands of a

common ſoldier, who was ignorant of his rank; when a ſon of his, who had been dumb from his infancy, found the uſe of ſpeech, and averted the impending blow, by crying out—ſpare Crœſus.

But this miraculous interpoſition was likely to be of little uſe to the unfortunate monarch; for, according to the cruel uſage of thoſe times, he was deſtined to be a ſacrifice to the gods. When leading to the place where he was to be offered, the words of Solon recurred moſt forcibly to his imagination; and repeating the name of that Athenian with great vehemence, Cyrus demanded the reaſon of it. Crœſus then informed him of what had paſſed between himſelf and that Philoſopher; which ſo forcibly ſtruck the Conqueror, that he not only ſpared the life of Crœſus, but treated him ever afterwards with kindneſs and reſpect. Crœſus now requeſted and obtained permiſſion, to ſend the chains with which he had been bound to Delphos, as a proof that the prediction of its oracle was falſe; but he received for anſwer, that Cyrus

was the mule it meant; his mother being a Median, and his father a Perſian.

Before I proceed, I ſhall make a few comments on the words of Solon. No man appeared to be more ſecure of worldly happineſs than Crœſus; yet in a few years you have ſeen him ſtripped of every thing, and even on the point of being ſacrificed. Let us then learn, from a Heathen Philoſopher, to place a juſt value, and no more, on the things of this life. But yet I will allow, that rank and wealth may be productive of the moſt certain advantages. With them the poor may be relieved—the oppreſſed may be reſcued—and the owner may thus ſecure both power and riches that will be permanent; where neither ruſt nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and ſteal.

With Lydia all its dependencies, except the Grecian cities, immediately fell to the conqueror. Theſe cities had offended Cyrus by refuſing to join him againſt Crœſus; and as he would not now give them the ſame

terms they had from Lydia, they prepared to oppoſe him. Miletus, a city of Ionia, alone found means to obtain the favour of Cyrus; and all the reſt were, in a ſhort time, reduced by his victorious arms.

Though the Lydians were idolaters, they did not extend their worſhip to animals, or to any part of inanimate nature. One very infamous practice prevailed, which was, that every unmarried woman proſtituted herſelf for money; though after the nuptial tie they were remarkably chaſte. Coining is ſuppoſed to have originated here, and moſt of the early games and amuſements, except cheſs, are imputed to the Lydians.

Phœnicia was remarkable in this æra for giving birth to Sanchoniathon, the oldeſt prophane hiſtorian; and, according to Sir Iſaac Newton, he wrote about the year 760. Of the other Aſiatic countries, all that I deem neceſſary has fallen in with the Aſſyrian and Babyloniſh empire. No account of the Indies yet appears, nor was China, in the year 536, known even by name.

Nitocris, queen of Egypt, died about the

year 788, and her ſucceſſor, Aſychis, erected the eaſtern portico of the temple of Vulcan. After his reign, which was ſhort, Egypt became divided into ſeveral petty ſtates. Ethiopia, thereupon, ſhook off its ſubjection, and about the year 751, we find Sabbaco ſeated on its throne. He was young, powerful, and ambitious; and entering Egypt at the head of a mighty army, he vanquiſhed all the petty Kings that had ariſen in that country. Having reſtored tranquillity, he poſſeſſed the ſceptre for fifty years, during which he governed Egypt and Ethiopia with juſtice and wiſdom. He is the ſame with the So of Scripture, that was treating with Hoſhea, King of Iſrael.

Sethon, the next King of Egypt, was remarkably religious: from whence it is ſaid, he was at firſt much deſpiſed by the ſoldiers. But they changed their opinion, when an Aſſyrian army, that was preparing to enter Egypt was defeated, by means of a number of field mice cutting their bow-ſtrings the night before the battle. This they now im-

puted to the piety of their King, and in commemoration of it, a ſtatue of him was erected, with a mouſe at his foot, and an inſcription, that whoever beheld him ſhould be pious.

Tirhakah ſucceeded Sethon, but Aſſerhadon, King of Aſſyria, diſpoſſeſſed him both of Egypt and Ethiopia. This ſubjection did not long continue, for on the death of Aſſerhadon twelve Egyptian noblemen induced their countrymen to revolt, and ſubmit to their juriſdiction. For their accommodation a magnificent palace was built for each. Theſe were all erected in the ſame place, communicating with one another, and from the prodigious number of rooms which they contained, the whole was afterwards called the Egyptian Labyrinth.

This joint government continued for ſeveral years, till one of them, named Pſammitichus, found means to uſurp the entire ſovereignty. In this he was chiefly aided by a body of mercenary Greeks from Aſia-Minor; and on his proving ſucceſsful, he gave them ſettlements in Egypt. He alſo opened his

ports to every foreigner, numbers of the Egyptians having fled from the convulſions of their country. This brought about a wonderful change in the cuſtoms and manners of the ſubſequent inhabitants: for loſing their averſion to ſtrangers, and naval enterpriſes, they became a rich and enterpriſing people.

Pſammitichus added ſeveral parts of Phœnicia to his territories; but on the approach of the Scythians, under their King Madyes, he choſe rather to purchaſe a retreat, than venture an engagement with that fierce and warlike people. By him the laſt portico to the temple of Vulcan was finiſhed: And after a reign of fifty-four years, reckoning from his firſt ſharing the ſupreme power, he was ſucceeded by Nechus, the Pharaoh Necho of Scripture.

This Prince was very diligent in increaſing his armies, and he had alſo numerous fleets both on the Red and Mediterranean ſeas. Many of the Phœnicians, who were the moſt expert mariners of thoſe days, were in his ſervice; and, by his orders, they now un-

dertook and performed the greateſt voyage that had yet been known in the world; for ſailing out of the Red Sea, they doubled the moſt ſouthern part of Africa, and returned to Egypt through the pillars of Hercules, after having ſpent three years and upwards on this new and arduous undertaking.

Nechus was alſo for a time a very ſucceſsful conqueror, extending his arms to the banks of the Euphrates; but Nebuchadnezzar and Cyaxares obliged him to retire, and for the reſt of his reign he was forced to confine himſelf to the ancient boundaries of Egypt. Pſammis, his ſon, was a very ſhort time on the throne; and after him the crown devolved on Apries, the Pharaoh Hophra of the Bible.

Apries added the city of Sidon and the iſland of Cyprus to his dominions; but he behaved with ſo much pride and cruelty, that his ſubjects, at length, almoſt univerſally wiſhed to dethrone him: On which Amaſis, the favourite of Apries, and whom he had raiſed from a very mean ſituation, put him-

ſelf at the head of the diſcontented, and openly rebelled againſt his ſovereign.

Apries had a number of mercenary Greeks from Aſia-Minor, with whom for a time he made head againſt the ungrateful Amaſis. To add to the miſeries of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar invaded it during this civil war, plundering both it and Ethiopia with impunity. At length a deciſive action took place between Amaſis and Apries, in which the latter was defeated and ſtrangled; after which Amaſis made terms with Nebuchadnezzar, holding both Egypt and Ethiopia as tributary to that conqueror. His reign proved a very long one; for Amaſis was alive when Cyrus founded the Medo-Perſian empire. I ſhall only add, that Manetho, an Egyptian proſe author, flouriſhed a little later than Sanchoniathon, and was nearly cotemporary with Beroſus, the Perſian.

Of Ethiopia, all that is neceſſary to be obſerved has fallen in with my account of Egypt; and of Lybia there is nothing memorable, but that a colony from the iſland of Thera, gave riſe to a new kingdom, called

Cyrene, which was before a part of that country. This was about the year 633, and Battus, the fourth of that name, was King over it about the time that Cyrus vanquiſhed Darius.

Carthage was riſing with great rapidity, and was ſoon to ſurpaſs her parent Tyre; But there are no authentic records of her hiſtory during the period I am now treating of; and all the other countries of Africa were buried in abſolute obſcurity.

THIRD LETTER.

OF all the countries in Peloponneſus, Sparta became the moſt eminent. You have ſeen it given to two brothers, who were deſcended from Hercules. They fixed this very ſingular government; that a regular ſucceſſion of two Kings ſhould continue; and that every vacancy ſhould be filled up out of the line of the deceaſed monarch. From Agis, the ſon of Euryſthenes, that race of Kings were called by the general name of Agidæ; whilſt

the other was denominated the Eurytionidæ, from Eurytion, the grandſon of Procles.

About the year 720, Polydectes, one of theſe Kings, was cut off in an inſurrection, leaving his queen pregnant. The crown then devolved to his brother Lycurgus, till it was known whether the poſthumous child would prove male or female. In this ſtate of affairs, the widow of Polydectes propoſed to Lycurgus to deſtroy the fruit of her womb, provided he would marry her. To this propoſal Lycurgus feigned a compliance, but on the expreſs condition, that ſhe would let the child come fairly into the world; and if a male, ſhe was to ſend it privately to him, and leave its deſtruction to his care. It proved to be a boy, and the virtuous Lycurgus no ſooner got the child, than he produced him to the Spartan magiſtrates, owning him for his King, by the name of Charilaus. This conduct deſerved, and obtained the applauſe of all who were virtuous; but the queen felt very different emotions, and having ſtirred up her friends againſt Lycurgus, he thought it moſt prudent to retire from his native country.

Though the government of two Kings had continued, it was the cauſe of the moſt dreadful factions. The abſence of Lycurgus, and the minority of Charilaus, ſtill further increaſed them; till at length Sparta became a ſcene of confuſion and anarchy. The beſt men of both parties, thereupon, turned their thoughts to Lycurgus, as the only man capable of reſtoring order to the diſtracted ſtate; and he was unanimouſly invited to return.

Lycurgus had viſited Crete, Egypt, and ſeveral countries of Aſia-Minor, carefully inveſtigating the laws and cuſtoms of all. He therefore did not decline an invitation, which he thought himſelf qualified to obey; but he reſolved to take every ſtep that could add to his influence over the minds of his countrymen. For this purpoſe he viſited the Delphic oracle, and obtained a reſponſe, that he himſelf was more than human, and that his laws would make Sparta a great and powerful kingdom. Thus ſupported, by what was deemed infallible authority, he proceeded on

his journey, and arrived about the year 708 at the place of his nativity.

But ſtill the taſk was arduous, and before he ventured to promulge his plan to the many, he ſubmitted it to thirty of the principal Spartans. They gave their approbation, and engaged to attend in arms when he publicly propoſed his laws. Twenty-eight kept their word, and after a ſlight commotion, in which Lycurgus loſt an eye, his code was fully eſtabliſhed.

A ſenate, compoſed of the twenty-eight citizens who aſſiſted Lycurgus, was appointed as a balance between the Kings and the people. They held the appointment for life, and all vacancies were filled up by the people; but none could be elected that were under the age of ſixty. The Kings preſided in the ſenate; and whatever was agreed to there, was ſubmitted to the people at large; but no law could originate with the latter.

The lands of Lacedemonia were now divided into thirty thouſand equal ſhares; and the city of Sparta, with its immediate vicinage, into nine thouſand. Each head of a family got one ſhare; and as none could alien-

ate, a perfect equality took place, except thoſe diſtinctions that aroſe from rank and office. Inſtead of eating at their reſpective homes, public tables were appointed for all the males. Each table held about fifteen, and ſo far they had a choice of their ſociety, that when a vacancy at any board happened, no man could fill it unleſs approved of by that community. Each perſon ſent into the public ſtores a buſhel of meal, five pounds of cheeſe, two pounds and a half of figs, and eight gallons of wine, once in every month; and they paid likewiſe a ſmall ſum of money to provide fleſh and fiſh. The young people were allowed to eat the fiſh and fleſh; but the general food of thoſe who had reached maturity, was a black broth, of a very homely kind; and the only compliment paid to their Kings, was a double portion of every thing.

The Spartan dreſs, as ordered by Lycurgus, was ſo thin and light, as to become proverbial. Nor did he allow any kind of ornament in their dwellings; for they could uſe no other inſtrument than a ſaw in forming their doors, and an axe in conſtructing their

cielings. Their beds were coarſe and hard: and as an effectual barrier againſt luxury, no coin but that of iron was permitted; gold and ſilver being abſolutely prohibited.

The education of the youth was equally ſingular. From the moment a child was born it belonged to the ſtate, and was taken care of at the public expence. When a boy attained his ſeventh year, he was put under proper maſters, and trained to martial exerciſes. They were alſo taught to bear fatigue and pain without murmuring. At ſtated times, though guilty of no fault, they were ſcourged at the altar of Diana; and whoever bore it, without letting any ſymptom of ſuffering appear, was peculiarly honoured; and it is ſaid theſe whippings were ſometimes ſo ſevere, as to be attended with death. Theft was univerſally practiſed and inculcated; but if diſcovered, ſeverely puniſhed; to avoid which, a young Spartan, who had ſtolen a fox, afterwards ſuffered the animal to eat into his bowels, under the concealment of his cloak, rather than be detected. The Spartans having almoſt every thing in common, theft

could have but little operation as to themſelves; but it made them expert againſt their enemies. For the ſame reaſon, the young men were trained to march, and do every thing by night without lights, which rendered them very famous for nocturnal enterpriſes. A conciſe mode of expreſſion, which has ſince been called Laconic, from Laconia, a province in Lacedemonia, was alſo inculcated; for they were as ſparing of their words as of their clothes and proviſions. Such of the youth as excelled in thoſe Spartan perfections, obtained a ſort of command over the others: but the old men were always conſidered in the light of fathers, and as ſuch were obeyed. The young at all times ſtood in their preſence; and at the public meals, they were inſtructed in the laws and regulations of their country.

No man under thirty could ſerve in the army, or fill any office; and after ſeventy, they were exonerated from all duty: But except in time of war, thoſe who had arrived at maturity had nothing to do. Lycurgus's aim was to make a nation of ſoldiers, and to accompliſh it, he forbade them to ſurround their

city with walls. It is ſaid, that defence alone was intended; but this law-giver muſt have been ſhort-ſighted indeed, if he did not foreſee, that his regulations would lead them to attack the rights of others. Even their deities, Venus not excepted, were clad in armour: And whenever the Spartans took the field, they were permitted to ornament their perſons, and to indulge in whatever food they thought proper. Peace was therefore a ſtate of puniſhment, and war became their higheſt recreation.

Before an engagement, they particularly ſacrificed to the muſes; and began the action with hymns and ſongs that raiſed their valour to the higheſt pitch of enthuſiaſm. To make the practice of religious duties frequent, Lycurgus taught them very conciſe forms of prayer, and the ſacrifices which he ordered were of the cheapeſt materials. Having performed theſe duties, they feared nothing; and an honourable death was preferred to flight and ignominy.

In regard to their women, the young ones were accuſtomed to the moſt robuſt exerciſes,

and frequently contended publicly with the oppoſite ſex. In ſuch ſports, both parties were naked; and at all times the Spartan women uſed but little concealment. To make them hardy and healthy mothers, was the ſole end in view; for ſtrong children were deemed ſo eſſential, that there were judges appointed to examine all that were born; and if feeble or decrepid, they were thrown into a cavern where they periſhed. No woman received any portion; and for a conſiderable time after marriage, the huſband could only viſit her in the dark, and by ſtealth. Matrimony was however highly honourable, and an unmarried man, at a certain age, was reckoned infamous. He was alſo obliged to walk naked at a particular ſeaſon, ſinging his own diſgrace, beſides paying additional taxes: whereas a married man, with three children, paid very little, and he who had four was entirely exempted. Another law, as to the fair ſex, was repugnant to every principle of modeſty and delicacy. Every woman, except their queens, might be lent by their huſbands

to other men; and it became a common practice.

The expence of funerals was rendered trivial; and in order to prevent expenſive dreſſes in the women, it was made infamous for them to appear with either gold or ſilver ornaments. In every thing, Lycurgus ſtudied to root out all temptation to the acquiring of wealth. For this end he totally precluded commerce, and forbade all intercourſe with ſtrangers. The Spartans were alſo ordered to abſtain from taking the ſpoils of thoſe they vanquiſhed; but all theſe regulations could not control their luſt for conqueſt.

From the obedience inſtilled in the young, a very implicit obedience was paid to the magiſtrates: And any man found guilty of breaking the laws, was not only for ever precluded from their public offices, but was likewiſe prohibited from ſpeaking in their popular aſſemblies.

Perhaps no part of the Spartan laws was more exceptionable than the treatment of their ſlaves. Theſe went under the name of

Helots, becauſe the firſt people they reduced to this abject ſtate were the inhabitants of Helos, a town in their neighbourhood. The Helots performed every menial office, and were treated with the greateſt barbarity. At certain ſeaſons they were obliged to get drunk, in order to expoſe its beaſtlineſs to the Spartan youth. But there was a law, which by ſome is imputed to Lycurgus, whilſt others make it of later introduction, that was peculiarly infamous. It was called the Crypta, and was as follows: Whenever the ſenate judged that the Helots became more numerous than was neceſſary, they made a ſecret decree, that a given number ſhould be ſlain. The execution of it was then given to a choſen body of Spartan youth, who ſallied out and ſlew the ſlaves they firſt met, till the allotted number was deſtroyed.

Lycurgus having finiſhed his regulations, propoſed to his countrymen, that he ſhould again viſit the Delphic oracle, and inquire what yet remained to be enacted: But before he ſet out, he bound them by an oath, on their own part, and that of their poſterity,

that no alteration ſhould be made until he returned to Sparta. From the oracle he obtained a reſponſe, that the laws he had made were moſt excellent, and that Sparta ſhould be renowned ſo long as they were obeyed. This he tranſmitted to Lacedemonia; but in order to make his code perpetual, he relinquiſhed his country, and, as ſome ſay, ſtarved himſelf to death. The Spartans then conceived their oath to be indiſſoluble. They, therefore, reſolved to obſerve his laws for ever; at the ſame time erecting a temple, and inſtituting feſtivals to his memory.

The great object of theſe celebrated laws, was to preſerve equality—prevent luxury—and to render the Spartans invincible. It muſt be owned, they were admirably calculated for theſe purpoſes. But here let us ſtop our praiſe. —The deſtroying of their ſickly children, and ſcourging their healthy, though guilty of no crime, was equally cruel and unjuſt. The taking children from their parents, and lending of their wives, was deſtructive to every parental and conjugal affection; and their making men ſlaves, with their treatment of

them, was oppoſite to every principle of juſtice and humanity.

To control vice, and to promote virtue, ought to be the aim of every legiſlator; but in theſe laws, virtue and vice were very little, if at all conſidered. To make this petty ſtate warlike and permanent was all that was in view; and the choiceſt bleſſings, and deareſt rights of human nature, equally fell before theſe favourite objects. Inſtead of cultivating the feelings, and reſtraining the paſſions, Lycurgus, ſtrove to eradicate both, as if he were wiſer than their Creator; and the creature he would have ſubſtituted was an object of abhorrence. Contemplate the Spartan at the age of thirty, fit for no buſineſs but war, and allowed to follow no other. Behold him ſpending his time at his meals of black broth—exulting in his laconic expreſſions—and boaſting his ignorance of all the arts and conveniencies of life. View him at night returning to his houſe, which by the laws of his country was doomed to remain for ever a hovel; and where he was to meet a wife in whom every accompliſhment, and

every female blandiſhment, had been carefully prevented. It is true, the love of country was implanted in their minds, and death was deſpiſed in its defence. But was this ſingle virtue a recompence for being deprived of almoſt every thing that ſweetens life? Or was it worth any rational being's while, to give up his natural rights, in order to become a member of ſuch a ſociety? I will aſk, are not the ſavages of America, who, in their wandering ſtate, indulge their conjugal, filial, parental, and friendly feelings, far to be preferred? And if every heart will anſwer with mine, that it is; on what principle can I give my approbation to the laws of Lycurgus?

As for Lycurgus himſelf, he ſtands high in my eſtimation. Had he been a villain, he might have poſſeſſed a crown; and his devoting himſelf to death or exile, in order to perpetuate his laws, is an unequivocal proof, that he was governed by the nobleſt motives; and though we may with juſtice cenſure his

code, we cannot extend our condemnation to its diſintereſted Author.

Lycurgus did not reduce his laws to writing, but they were ſoon after recorded by Terpander, a Lyric poet, and celebrated by his muſe. Terpander was victor at the Pythic games in the twenty-ſixth Olympiad, and was the firſt who diſtinguiſhed the different kinds of Lyric muſic. About the ſame time Ardolus and Clonas made diſtinctions in wind muſic; and from this period muſic and poetry began to flouriſh in Greece.

About the year 652, a quarrel broke out between the Meſſenians and Spartans. Antiochus was then King of the former, and Alcamenes and Nicomander, were joint ſovereigns of the latter. When the Spartans took the field, their monarchs ſwore, that conqueſt or death ſhould be their portion; but being repulſed, they returned to Sparta amidſt the reproaches of their ſubjects, which they did not long ſurvive. Their ſucceſſors, Theopompus and Alcamenes, had rather better ſucceſs; but a battle that happened not

being deciſive, both armies retired to their reſpective cities.

This war involved in it moſt of the Peloponneſian ſtates. The Argives, Sicyonians, and Arcadians joined the Meſſenians; and Sparta was aſſiſted by Corinth; but at length the Lacedemonians proved victorious, and Meſſene was ſubjected to them about the year 632.

During this war the citizens of Sparta were abſent ſeveral years; having ſworn to keep the field till Meſſene yielded to their arms. The women, thereupon, repreſented to them, that the ſtate would want people, to prevent which, a certain number were diſpatched from the camp, with orders to lie promiſcuouſly with all the virgins. The iſſue of this ſtrange connexion were, however, treated with great contempt, and when the males attained to manhood, they meditated a dreadful revenge; for drawing in a number of the Helots to their party, it was reſolved, that they ſhould maſſacre the reſt of the Spartans. But a timely diſcovery defeated their pur-

poſe; and when the treatment they had met with was conſidered, they were ſuffered to paſs into Italy, where they founded the city of Tarentum.

About the year 607, Ariſtomenes, who was of the Meſſenian royal blood, made an effort to emancipate his country. But having fought many battles with various ſucceſs, he was at length forced to give up his enterpriſe; after which moſt of his people paſſed into Sicily, founding the city of Meſſene; and the Spartans, thereupon, divided amongſt them that territory which they had abandoned.

During the firſt Meſſenian war, a very material alteration took place in the Spartan conſtitution. This was a fourth power, called the Ephori, conſiſting of five perſons, annually elected by the people. They preſided in all popular aſſemblies—treated of peace and war—fixed the number of troops to be employed—and diſtributed rewards and puniſhments. Nay, they had even the power of ſuſpending the Kings; and when that happened, they were not reſtored till an

oracle directed it. Thus, in fact, the regal authority was nearly annihilated, little more being left it than the command of the forces. The uſual mode of commemorating things in Sparta, after this change, was by the name of the firſt choſen amongſt theſe five, he being particularly termed the Ephori: they therefore ſaid, that ſuch and ſuch events took place, when ſuch and ſuch perſons filled that office.

The kingdom of Argos underwent ſeveral commotions, and about the year 596 it was divided into ſeveral petty ſtates. Phydon, who was deſcended from Hercules, then reunited them; but he was no ſooner dead, than the regal dignity was aboliſhed, and a democracy eſtabliſhed on its ruins.

Corinth continued under a regal government to the year 658, when the ſupreme power became veſted in two hundred perſons, who were called the Bacchiadæ. Out of theſe they elected a chief magiſtrate, named Prytanis, but his particular duty is not recorded.

About the year 590, the ſupreme authority again reverted to one hand. This was Cypſelus, and he tranſmitted it to his ſon Periander, who was deemed one of the ſeven wiſe men of Greece. He died about the year 557, and then the government of the Bacchiadæ was reſtored.

The ſituation of the Corinthians was peculiarly adapted to trade, nor did they overlook ſo great an advantage. They were the firſt amongſt the Greeks who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in naval affairs; and the earlieſt ſea engagement, that is recorded, was between them and the Corcyreans, about the year 557.

Of Elis there is nothing memorable till the reign of Iphitus. According to the directions of an oracle, he reſtored the Olympic games. Hitherto they had been only occaſionally, but it was now fixed, that they ſhould be celebrated once in every fourth year; and as this regulation commenced in the year 776, it was called the firſt Olympiad; the ſecond fell in the year 770; and henceforth the moſt memorable things were ſet down, as happen-

ing in the firſt, ſecond, third, or fourth year, of the firſt, ſecond, third, or any other Olympiad.

The games at this meeting ſoon became the moſt celebrated of any in the world. At firſt they were only attended by the inhabitants of Greece, but they were afterwards reſorted to from various countries. Their duration was for five days, and the chief ſports were races on foot, on horſe-back, and in chariots; they had alſo wreſtling, and a game like quoits, and ſeveral other conteſts were in time introduced.

For many years Iphitus and his ſucceſſors preſided in theſe games; but at length two perſons were nominated by the cities of Olympia and Piſa to ſuperintend them. Theſe were afterwards increaſed to ten, and then to twelve; each city deputing one half of thoſe who reſpectively filled that office; and they were called the Hellenodicæ, or Judges of Greece.

Arcadia retained its regal government and independence. Achaia was firſt divided into

ſeven petty ſtates, each of which ſent deputies to the city of Helici, for the enacting of general laws: but five cities more joining in this compact, the place of meeting was changed to Ægium; and we ſhall hereafter find the Achæan league of great importance.

FOURTH LETTER.

AT Athens the office of Archon continued in the poſterity of Codrus till about the year 647. The Athenians then thought proper to make the office elective, and only ten years in duration; but in the courſe of forty years more, nine perſons were elected to the chief magiſtracy, and the decennial appointment of one was totally aboliſhed. The firſt of the nine magiſtrates retained the name of Archon—the ſecond was called Baſileus or King—the third Polemarchus—and the other ſix Theſmo. The Archon and Baſileus preſided in civil affairs, and the Polemarchus regulated all military tranſactions, whilſt the other ſix were guardians and inſpectors of the

laws: and the Athenian year was henceforth commemorated by the name of the Archon.

In the year 572, Draco was raiſed to the office of firſt magiſtrate. No written laws were yet in uſe amongſt the Athenians, and they eagerly agreed to receive a fixed code from Draco: but he puniſhed every thing with death, and his laws were truly ſaid to be written in blood. It was a cuſtom at Athens for the people to ſhow their favour, by throwing their cloaks on ſuch as they approved. They did ſo to Draco on his entering a public aſſembly, but being a little old man, he was ſmothered by this feigned or real kindneſs, and his laws went into immediate oblivion.

Much about this time Solon, a deſcendant of Codrus, began to be diſtinguiſhed. By his exertions the iſland of Salamis, which had been taken by the Megareans, a ſmall ſtate in the neighbourhood of Athens, was regained: and at the Amphictyonic council, he eſpouſed the cauſe of the Delphic oracle

againſt the Cyrrheans, who had invaded its territories. In conſequence of his advice, the city and diſtrict of Cyrrha was ſubdued, and added to the country of Phocis. The affair of Salamis had before rendered him dear to his native country; and this public ſervice ſpread his fame throughout Greece.

About the year 562 Solon was honoured by his countrymen with the office of Archon. The utmoſt confuſion then reigned at Athens, ſome being for an Ariſtocratic, others for a Democratic, and not a few for a mixed form of government. All however looked up to Solon, and had he thought proper, he might have renewed in himſelf the regal dignity; but he nobly preferred giving them ſuch laws as in his opinion would render them happy.

Theſeus had divided the people into three orders, the nobles, labourers, and mechanics. This arrangement was now changed, and Solon conſtituted four claſſes, in which he attended to fortune only. Each of the firſt claſs paid a talent annually to the ſtate; thoſe of the ſecond furniſhed one horſe each; the third had a ſpecified wealth, and all who had

not that ſum, conſtituted the loweſt order of the people.

The magiſtrates and different officers could only be choſen out of the firſt three claſſes; but as every citizen had the right of voting, the fourth had the greateſt weight, being by far the moſt numerous. To balance this, Solon created a ſenate, compoſed of one hundred from each order; and no alteration in the laws could be propoſed to the aſſembled people, unleſs it was firſt approved by the ſenate.

The court of Areopagus, which is ſuppoſed to have been early eſtabliſhed, was at this time new modelled: and to render it truly reſpectable, no man could be a member of it till he had ſerved the office of Archon. The cauſes of moſt conſequence came before this court, and though an appeal lay from it, as well as from every other, to the people at large, who aſſembled weekly, it was ſome centuries before the deciſion of the Areopagus was once impeached. Beſides it, there were inferior courts, and the nine annual magiſtrates were elected as formerly.

Murder and ſacrilege were puniſhed with death, and an Archon taken in drink alſo forfeited his life. In all public diſſentions every citizen muſt take one ſide or other, on pain of baniſhment and forfeiture of property. If a man caught his wife in the act of adultery, he might kill the adulterer with impunity; but if he afterwards lived with her, he was deemed infamous: And a woman once proved an adultereſs, had no right to wear any ſort of ornament. A raviſher was heavily fined. If a man put out the eye of another, he loſt one in return; but if the perſon injured had loſt his only eye, then the offender loſt both. It was lawful to kill a robber in any attempt by night; but by day he could only be brought to trial, and puniſhed by fines and other penalties. For theft the thief only paid double, but the perſon wronged might expoſe him in chains for five days and as many nights. Any perſon accuſing another to the people, and not having a fifth part of the votes on his ſide, was heavily fined. No one was allowed to ſpeak ill of the dead under a ſevere penalty; and if

one man reviled another in a public aſſembly, he paid a fine to him he abuſed, and alſo one to the ſtate. Any citizen might try another for idleneſs, and if thrice convicted of it, the perſon became infamous. A ſon who refuſed to maintain his parents was infamous; unleſs he could ſhew that he was not brought up to any mode of getting a livelihood. He who ſquandered his patrimony was alſo infamous; and whoever was deemed infamous, was incapable of ſpeaking in public, or of filling any office in the ſtate. A man convicted of keeping company with lewd women, was alſo precluded from ſpeaking in public: and he who avoided going to war in his turn, or deſerted from the army, was rendered incapable of office. Any injury done to the ſtate, of any kind, might be brought before the people, and any citizen might be the accuſer. The Oſtraciſm is by ſome imputed to Solon, whilſt others ſay it did not originate with that lawgiver. This was a regulation by which any citizen might be baniſhed, without even an accuſation: it was done by writing the name of him who was diſliked on ſhells, which

were put into a place appointed to receive them; but if there were leſs than ſix thouſand ſuch votes, it was of no effect. This ſtrange law was intended to prevent any one from aiming at the Tyranny: but we ſhall hereafter find ſome of the moſt worthy amongſt the Athenians driven from their country by means of the Oſtraciſm and the caprice of the people.

The regulations as to civil matters were principally thoſe. When Solon began to legiſlate, he found the people greatly in debt, and extremely miſerable, as the creditors had a right to treat their debtors with ſeverity; he therefore aboliſhed all debts, making the property, and not the perſon, liable in future. On this occaſion he had a glorious opportunity of proving his own liberality, as he loſt five talents himſelf by this new regulation. A bride of the higheſt rank brought her huſband no more than three gowns, and a few houſehold goods, unleſs ſhe was an heireſs. A guardian could not marry the mother of his ward, nor could the next heir have the care of a minor's perſon. An heireſs

had a right to demand the next male relation to marry her, and if he refuſed, he was obliged to pay her five hundred drachmæ. The next of kin could alſo compel an heireſs to marry him, but if he was impotent, ſhe might have a connexion with any of his relations, without incurring the penalty of an adultereſs. Thoſe who had no children might leave their poſſeſſions to whom they pleaſed. Children whoſe fathers fell in battle were educated at the public expence, till they attained the age of twenty-one. Maimed ſoldiers were alſo taken care of. The expence of the funerals, which had become exorbitant, was now limited to a trifling ſum. There were fixed days in the year for public meals, and the citizens were obliged to attend them in rotation or pay a fine. Strangers could not be naturalized, unleſs accompanied by their family and fortune. Solon did not aboliſh ſlavery, but he greatly mitigated its ſeverity, and left it in the power of the maſters to give their ſlaves both property and freedom. Every citizen was obliged to ſerve in the army and navy by rotation, and

a perpetual fleet was eſtabliſhed. For this purpoſe, twelve hundred of the wealthieſt Athenians were divided into ſeventy-five companies, each of which furniſhed one galley completely equipped. Theſe were Solon's chief regulations, which he admitted were not as good as they might have been; but he alledged that Attica was not capable of receiving better: he therefore got them eſtabliſhed by the ſenate and people, who ſwore that they would not infringe them for one hundred years.

Solon now abſented himſelf from Athens for ten years, which he ſpent in viſiting other countries. He ſpent ſome time at Miletus, in Aſia-Minor, with the great Thales, who was a native of that city. Solon, who was married, and an admirer of that connexion, could not help expreſſing ſome ſurpriſe that Thales continued a bachelor. Thales did not then ſay much, but a few days after, a ſtranger, who was in their company, related the death of a celebrated youth, who from the deſcription, could be no other than the ſon of Solon; and the Athenian philoſopher imme-

diately burſt into tears. Thales, who had contrived this merely to point out the calamities that might be created by matrimony, quickly removed his grief. But ſuch reaſoning was unjuſt. Thales would not enjoy the greateſt pleaſures in life, becauſe he might be deprived of them; and he forgot, that a well regulated mind, though it muſt feel for ſuch loſſes, will ſoon return to its wonted firmneſs.

The Greek ſtates in Aſia and Europe were at this time diſtinguiſhed by five other great men. Theſe were Periander, King of Corinth; Chilo, a Spartan; Bias, a native of the city of Priene, in Ionia; Cleobulus, King of Rhodes; and Pittacus, King of Leſbos. They were honoured by the appellation of the ſeven wiſe Grecians; and the friendſhip which, without envy, ſubſiſted between them, is a ſtrong proof, that they were not undeſerving of that character.

When Solon returned to Athens, he had the mortification of finding it divided into different factions. Piſiſtratus, one of his own relations, headed the moſt powerful,

He was poſſeſſed of great abilities, an ample fortune, and well verſed in the arts of popularity. Solon foreſaw and pointed out his deſigns; but the voice of an old Philoſopher was little attended to; and Piſiſtratus in a ſhort time poſſeſſed himſelf of the ſupreme power; or, as it was now called amongſt the Greeks, of the Tyranny.

Solon ſtill continued to inveigh againſt his uſurpation, inſomuch that every one thought his life would be the forfeit. But Piſiſtratus, though he had not virtue to imitate, admired the behaviour of Solon, and made his laws the chief rule of his conduct. He alſo ſuffered him to retire without moleſtation; and afterwards ſolicited his return, promiſing him his patronage and protection: but Solon could not be prevailed on to accept this invitation, and he never reviſited his native city.

It was now that Solon appeared at the Lydian court; and he did not long ſurvive his conference with Crœſus. Beſides his code of laws, he gave a better regulation to the Athenian year than it had before. He was alſo a poet, and ſome of his verſes are re-

corded. But legiſlation was his forte, and in it I think him far ſuperior to Lycurgus. In Sparta, even in her brighter days, there was but little deſirable; but under the milder influence of Solon's laws, Athens for a time became the moſt flouriſhing and enlightened city of the world. Nor were the Athenians blind to Solon's merits; for they erected a ſtatue to his memory, and his name was venerated to the lateſt days of that republic.

Piſiſtratus did not quietly poſſeſs his power. He was twice expelled, but as often made good his return, and at length eſtabliſhed his authority. He had perceived, from experience, that his uſurpation could have no ſtability, unleſs he broke the power of the people. Hitherto all who belonged to the country of Attica, had a voice in the public aſſembly. He, therefore, took the right of voting from all but the citizens of Athens. This pre-eminence was highly grateful to the inhabitants of the capital; and Piſiſtratus, for the reſt of his life, which extended beyond the year 536, retained the ſovereignty.

His uſurpation was, in many reſpects, ſerviceable to Athens; for he encouraged all who were celebrated in any branch to ſettle at his court. He alſo founded a public library for the increaſe of literature. By his means the ſtudy of Homer was inculcated; and muſic and poetry began to flouriſh under his protection. Architecture was alſo attended to; and in the year 536, Athens gave ſeveral prognoſtics of her future greatneſs.

In Bœotia, or Thebes, the democratic government ſtill prevailed. Theſſaly, Phocis, and Epirus are barren of events: ſo is Thrace; but the infant kingdom of Macedon is worthy of a little attention.

When Phidon poſſeſſed himſelf of the kingdom of Argos, about the year 596, he forced Cranaus, his brother, to fly. That Prince then conſulted the Delphic oracle as to his future deſtination. By its directions he led his followers to a part of that country, afterwards called Macedonia: And as he was ordered, he there followed a herd of goats, which he met with, till they halted. In that ſpot he founded the city of Æga, and he alſo

placed a goat in his ſtandard, that the reaſon of fixing there might be recorded. Perdiccas, his ſucceſſor, added to this territory; and in the courſe of a few more reigns, we ſhall find a powerful ſtate, in this hitherto uncivilized quarter.

FIFTH LETTER.

ABOUT the year 630 or 40, the regal government was aboliſhed in Crete. A ſenate compoſed of thirty nobles, ten annual magiſtrates called Coſmi, and the people at large, formed the new conſtitution. The ſenators were for life, and all laws originated with them, the people having only the power of receiving or rejecting. Vacancies in the ſenate were filled out of thoſe who had ſerved as Coſmi, but the people elected whoever they thought proper that was poſſeſſed of this qualification. The election of the Coſmi was alſo in the popular aſſembly, and the meaneſt Cretan was eligible. The Coſmi preſided in

civil affairs, and likewiſe commanded the forces; but they were accountable to the people for their conduct in both. The minutiæ of their laws are not recorded; but this change of legiſlation does not ſeem to have added to their happineſs, for Crete, in a ſhort time, had ſeveral petty ſtates, inſtead of an united iſland, and it was diſtracted by civil diſſentions for ſeveral centuries.

In Rhodes the regal government ſtill kept its ground. Samos had firſt its Kings; but long before Cyrus it was under an ariſtocracy. It had already riſen to conſiderable power by ſea, and had been engaged in ſeveral wars with Ægina, Corinth, and Megara. Leſbos had at firſt a number of petty ſtates, but that territory, of which Mitylene was the capital, at length ſubdued the reſt. Its form of government was either Ariſtocratic or Democratic, till Myrſilus uſurped the ſupreme power. He tranſmitted it to his ſon Pittacus, the cotemporary of Solon, and who was alſo reckoned a great law-giver. One of his regulations was, that a crime committed in liquor ſhould be doubly puniſhed; but little is

known as to the reſt of his code. After he had eſtabliſhed what he thought beſt for his countrymen, he generouſly abdicated that power which his father had unjuſtly obtained; and dedicated the reſt of his life to the purſuit of knowledge.

Corcyra, about the beginning of this æra, had changed its monarchical to a republican government, and had a very conſiderable navy. But Eubœa was ſtill more powerful on the ocean; and her cities of Eretria and Chalcis were become extremely opulent. They tranſplanted colonies into Thrace, Macedon, Sicily, Italy, and other countries. In the year 536, this iſland was one of the richeſt and moſt powerful ſtates of Greece, or the Archipelago: but it was vicious in proportion; and Chalcis, in particular, was already infamous for its avarice, and unnatural luſts.

Sicily is the only iſland that remains to be touched on. During my preſent period the cities of Naxus, Leontini, and Catana were founded by Eubœans. A colony from Megara, a city near Athens, gave riſe to Thap-

ſus and Megara Hyblæa. Some Cretans and Rhodians built Gela. Meſſana was raiſed by the Meſſenians. The famous city of Syracuſe owed its origin to a colony from Corinth. And, in ſhort, ſo many Grecian ſettlements were made in this delightful iſland, and the neighbouring part of Italy, that they were henceforth diſtinguiſhed collectively by the name of Grecia-Major.

But of all the cities which this æra produced, Rome claims our moſt particular attention. You have ſeen in my laſt period of hiſtory, that Tiberinus was King of the united Latines and Trojans. Numitor, the ſixth in ſucceſſion from Tiberinus, was depoſed by Amulius, his younger brother. He eſcaped with his life, but a ſon of Numitor was put to death, and Rhea Sylvia, his daughter and then only child, was made Prieſteſs to the temple of Veſta, which office enjoined perpetual celibacy.

Silvia was, notwithſtanding this precaution, delivered of male twins, alleging ſhe had been raviſhed by the God Mars: and by ſome it is ſaid, that Amulius himſelf, diſ-

guiſed in armour, had enjoyed his niece. Be this as it may, he cauſed her offspring to be put into a wooden trough, and ſet adrift on the Tiber. They eſcaped without injury, being left on its banks, where Fauſtulus, a herdſman to Amulius, found them; and it is related a woodpecker was then bringing them food, and a ſhe wolf ſuckling them. Struck with this miraculous appearance, Fauſtulus reſolved to take care of them; in which determination he was ſtrengthened by his wife Laurentia.

Romulus and Remus were the names beſtowed on theſe twins; and as they approached to manhood, they diſplayed ſuch courage and abilities, as gave them an allowed ſuperiority over all the neighbouring ſhepherds. When Numitor was expelled, he formed a new ſettlement not far diſtant from his former territory. His herdſmen meared with Fauſtulus, and ſome diſputes ariſing, Remus was on one occaſion taken priſoner, and brought before Numitor. When this news reached Fauſtulus, fearful of what might

happen, he reſolved to go to Numitor with Romulus, and unfold all that he knew touching theſe youths. He did ſo, and a diſcovery followed, that gave them a grandfather. A plan was ſoon laid, by which Amulius loſt his life; and the crown of Alba was again placed upon the head of Numitor.

The diſtrict round the ſpot where theſe twins had been ſo fortunately thrown, was now allotted to them and their followers. A diſpute however aroſe between Romulus and Remus, as to the ground whereon their new city was to be founded: and in order to end it, each took poſt on the place he preferred, at the ſame time agreeing, that which ever firſt ſaw a flight of vultures, ſhould decide the ſituation. In this Remus proved ſucceſsful; but Romulus alledging otherwiſe, a conteſt enſued, in which Remus fell, as is generally ſuppoſed, by the hands of his brother. Fauſtulus, and ſeveral others, alſo periſhed: and thus the foundation of Imperial Rome was not only ſtained with blood, but alſo with the guilt that attended the firſt of Adam's poſterity.

According to the common accounts, this city was founded by Romulus in the year 748; but Sir Iſaac Newton fixes it about the year 627. You will obſerve, that the Romans had no hiſtorians for two or three centuries after this laſt period. All their records were alſo burned by the Gauls, about the year 385. Sir Iſaac therefore tries the building of Rome by cotemporary events, and by calculations found to be true in other inſtances. It is agreed, that the expulſion of Tarquin, and the election of the firſt Conſuls, happened in the year 508. Before that there were but ſeven Kings, four of whom died violent deaths, and one was expelled. Now in all authentic hiſtory, it never happened that ſeven ſucceſſive Kings reigned two hundred and forty years. But one hundred and nineteen years is within the uſual calculations, and when the fate of moſt of theſe Kings is conſidered, it is rather under than over a proper allowance.

Rome at firſt contained not more than one thouſand huts; and all its inhabitants were

about three thouſand three hundred men. By mutual conſent theſe were divided into three equal tribes. Each tribe was then ſubdivided into ten curiæ, and theſe again into as many decuriæ. There were officers over each, and Romulus was King over all. The badge of his dignity was being preceded by twelve Lictors, who inſtantly bound and puniſhed whomſoever Romulus ordered. For this purpoſe they carried leather thongs at their girdles, and a bundle of rods in each of their hands, with an axe fixed in the ſticks: and ſuch was the firſt ſimple government of Rome.

Romulus, in order to increaſe his ſubjects, erected a temple to the Aſſylean God, declaring that he would protect whoever fled to it. All the worſt men of the neighbouring Italian ſtates thereupon crowded to Rome. But the character of the banditti he by this means collected, prevented any matrimonial intercourſe with other nations: And as all his ſubjects were males, the kingdom he had founded was likely to end with the preſent generation. In the breaſt of Romulus juſtice

and virtue never had a place. He made every thing ſubſervient to his ambition, and wives were provided for his people by the baſeſt ſtratagem.

He pretended, that in digging the foundation of Rome an altar to ſome unknown God had been diſcovered. It was then induſtriouſly reported through the neighbouring cities, which belonged to the Sabines, that on a certain day the moſt extraordinary games and feſtivals would be exhibited in honour of the new found deity. Curioſity, as he expected, drew a number of both ſexes to Rome: when, on a ſignal given, all the young women were ſeized, and the reſt of the ſpectators ſuffered to depart. Only one married woman happened to be detained, who became the wife of Hoſtus, a principal Roman; and the unmarried were alſo compelled to take ſuch huſbands as were allotted to them.

All the new ſubjects acquired by Romulus, had fallen in with one or other of the tribes; but from the great addition of people, new

regulations became neceſſary. A ſenate was formed by each tribe, naming three perſons, and every curiæ then ſent a like number. Theſe amounted in all to ninety-nine, and Romulus appointed one who preſided, which made up the hundred. This preſident was the next in dignity to Romulus, and termed the Prince of the ſenate. Theſe ſenators were called Patres, and their deſcendants Patricians. The Plebeians were likewiſe ſtyled Clients, and every one of them choſe a Senator or Patrician, to whoſe intereſt he connected himſelf. The greater number of Clients any man had, he was ſo much the more powerful: For the Plebeians were obliged to ſerve their Patricians, or Patrons, in a certain degree, both with money and perſonal exertions. In return, the Patron was bound to protect and ſee juſtice done to his followers: Nor could the Patron and Client take oppoſite ſides on any occaſion, without one or other being deemed highly criminal.

The diſtrict round Rome, as yet very inconſiderable, was divided into three unequal parts. One was allotted to the ſupport of

the temples; another to the regal eſtabliſhment; and the third was portioned out amongſt the citizens.

Every curiæ had a temple to itſelf, with the choice of its peculiar deity. Prieſts, Aruſpices, and Augurs held their offices for life; but none under fifty were eligible. Where Prieſteſſes officiated, they muſt be from the wives of Prieſts; except in the temple of Veſta, where virgins alone were admiſſible. Theſe were firſt two, then four, and afterwards ſix in number. If any of them committed a breach of chaſtity, the puniſhment was being buried alive. Theſe veſtals took care of the ſacred fire; and to let it be extinguiſhed, was deemed a high offence againſt the gods. The Aruſpices prognoſticated from the entrails of ſacrificed animals, and alſo from the flowing of their blood. The Augurs uſed a crooked ſtick, which was deemed ſacred; and divined from the flights and ſongs of birds. Theſe, and their other religious rights, were, for the moſt part, derived from the Greeks and Tro-

jans: But it is not my purpoſe to give you a minute account of Rome's idolatries.

Amongſt the civil regulations, the huſband might put his wife away under certain reſtrictions; but ſhe could not, on any account, leave her huſband without permiſſion. No man could have more than one wife at a time, which was alſo the caſe amongſt the Greeks. A father might ſell his child, or even put him to death; and no age or ſtation took away this privilege. Murder was puniſhed with death, but parricide was not particularized from any other ſpecies of that offence. This is ſaid to have been owing to no ſuch crime happening for a great length of time; and it was alſo ſome centuries before a man put away his wife: But unleſs a woman was guilty of adultery, poiſoned his children, or counterfeited his keys, the huſband, on putting away his wife, ſeverely puniſhed himſelf; for a moiety of his goods belonged to her, and the reſt was to be conſecrated to the temple of Ceres; beſides all which, he was to make an atonement to the gods of the earth.

In his new regulations, Romulus added

both to the power and ſtate of royalty. Each curiæ now furniſhed ten youths completely armed. Theſe united, conſtituted the King's guard, ſerving either as infantry or cavalry, as occaſion required. They were called Celeres, and divided into three centuries, over each of which a Centurion was placed; and the officer commanding all, was entitled the Tribunus Celerum.

Romulus kept to himſelf the right of preſiding in religious affairs. He alſo judged all great cauſes, leaving the trivial ones only to the ſenate; and when in the field, he was perfectly deſpotic. But war or peace was in the power of the ſenate and people. Their conſent was alſo neceſſary to any new law; ſo that, except in military affairs, it was a limited monarchy. Neither ſenate or people could, however, meet but at the pleaſure of Romulus.

The Sabines did not tamely ſubmit to the injury they had ſuſtained; but for ſome time their attempts to revenge it were altogether fruitleſs. At length Titus Tatius, one

of their Kings, approached with a conſiderable army. He found means to enter into a ſecret treaty with Tarpeia, the daughter of Tarpeius, who was governor of a ſtrong citadel within the walls of Rome. She obtained a promiſe of all the bracelets and rings of gold worn by the Sabine ſoldiers; in expectation of which ſhe betrayed the fortreſs. But inſtead of her reward, the ſhields of the conquerors were flung upon her, whereby ſhe was cruſhed to death: and the rock on which this citadel was built, ever afterwards bore the name of Tarpeian.

Several doubtful conflicts now took place between the forces of Tatius and Romulus. At length the Roman matrons ruſhed between the contending parties. In the one they had huſbands and ſons—in the other, fathers, brothers, and kinſmen. They therefore pointed out that whoever ſucceeded, rendered them miſerable: and their tears and pathetic expreſſions, at length prevailed. A peace was concluded, and the ſpot where this moving ſcene happened, was thenceforth called the Comitium.

The terms of agreement were, that Titus Tatius, and his ſubjects, ſhould become one people with the Romans. For this purpoſe one hundred Sabines were added to the Senate; and Tatius ſhared the ſovereign power. Rome was to be the ſeat of empire, and the joint people were called Quirites, an ancient Sabine name. A temple to Vulcan was then erected, in which the Kings and Senate were to meet; and this edifice was raiſed cloſe to the place where their union was accompliſhed.

Another conſequence of this junction, was a greater military eſtabliſhment. Legions of three thouſand, or, as ſome ſay, four thouſand infantry, and a proportion of horſe, were formed. How many legions were at this time raiſed, is not known, but they were probably three in number, as ſo many troops of horſemen or knights were then embodied. Thus Rome, inſtead of being weakened, was benefited by this attack; and in commemoration of the ſervice done by the women, a new feſtival was inſtituted, called the Matronalia.

The reign of Tatius was of ſhort duration. He was ſlain in the city of Lavinium, which belonged to Romulus, in right of his grandfather Numitor; nor was the founder of Rome free from ſuſpicion, though his death was aſcribed to other cauſes. The Sabines however acquieſced, and quietly ſubmitted to the ſole reign of Romulus.

Romulus had been almoſt conſtantly engaged in one war or other. He was almoſt always ſucceſsful, ſubduing ſeveral of the nighbouring cities, and removing many of their inhabitants to Rome: and ſuch an uninterrupted good fortune made him think too highly of himſelf. He, indeed, ſtudied to ſecure the lower orders, by giving them the conquered lands, and by other attentions; but he ſought for uncontrolled power, and treated the Senate with contempt. Such was the ſtate of affairs when he ſuddenly diſappeared. He was laſt ſeen with the Senators, and the people accuſed them of his death. Their reſentment was ſo great, that it is hard to ſay where it would have ended, had not Proculus found a way to appeaſe them. He

was a Senator high in their eſteem, and he ſolemnly ſwore that Romulus had appeared to him in bright and ſplendid armour; that he then informed him, he was aſcended to heaven, and that it was his pleaſure to be worſhipped by the Roman people under the name of Quirinus. This was received as truth, and inſtead of deſtroying the Senate, they haſted to pay thoſe divine honours which they ſuppoſed were thus enjoined them.

It is generally underſtood, that Romulus was killed by the Senators; who, in order to conceal the murder, cut him in pieces, and thus diſpoſed of the body without a diſcovery. His character may be given in a few words. He was a man of great courage and abilities, whoſe ambition was unbounded; and when it appeared neceſſary, he cared not what crime he committed in the purſuit of his favourite object. Triumphs originated with him; and having ſlain a King in one engagement, he introduced a particular ceremony, called the Spolia Opima. This could only take place when a Roman King or General ſlew the oppoſing King or General with

his own hand; and when that happened, the arms of the perſon thus ſlain, were carried in triumph before the Victor, and dedicated to Jupiter Feretrius. Beſides the Matronalia, the Feſtival of Laurentalia, Saturnalia, Carmentalia, Palilia, and Lupercalia, were fixed by Romulus; the particulars of which are in Banier.

Romulus dying without iſſue, the Senators agreed to ſhare the regal dignity. Ten were to enjoy it for five days; they were then to be ſucceeded by as many more, and for the ſame ſhort ſpace; and ſo on in a perpetual routine. But the people being very ſoon tired of ſo abſurd a government, demanded a King. As both Sabines and Romans had equal rights, the greateſt difficulty was to fix from which body the King ſhould be choſen. This was at length compromiſed, by giving the election to the Romans; at the ſame time confining them to the choice of a Sabine: and Numa Pompilius was unanimouſly called to the vacant throne.

Numa had been ſon-in-law to Titus Tatius; but on loſing his wife, whom he ten-

derly loved, he had devoted himſelf to ſtudy and retirement. The character he attained for virtue and piety, was univerſally known, and every one, except himſelf, rejoiced at his his elevation. When thoſe who were deputed came to acquaint him of the public voice, he urged his incapacity to ſway their ſceptre. He well knew the arduous duties of that ſtation to which they called him, and for ſome time declined it: but at length he was prevailed on to accept the ſovereignty, and was received with the greateſt applauſe by every deſcription of his ſubjects.

Numa was aware how much depended on popular opinion; he therefore carefully propagated, that he was allowed to converſe with the Nymph Egeria, a being ſuperior to mortals. He likewiſe pretended to be favoured with the ſociety of the Muſes: and the people being thus prepared, received his inſtitutions as divine.

To check the martial turn which the Romans had acquired, Numa added to the rites of religion. A Flamen Quirinalis was conſtituted in honour of Romulus; whoſe rank

was next to the Flamens of Jupiter and Mars. The Feciales, who were twenty in number, were firſt appointed in this reign. Their duty was to examine treaties, and declare for peace or war; for though the Senate and people were alſo to be conſulted, the Feciales had a right to over-rule their opinion. As all the prieſts were from the Patrician order, their increaſe and authority lowered the power of the people: and as their appointment was in Numa, it added to his own. He therefore got it alſo enacted, that the Augurs and Aruſpices, ſhould be always conſulted on ſtate affairs; and if the ſacrifices and other appearances were unfavourable, whatever had been propoſed was abandoned. By theſe means, an eaſy way was opened to give power to the monarch, without incurring the reſentment of the people.

The Salii, another order of prieſts, originated in his reign. A peſtilence afflicted Rome, and to relieve the terrors of the people, it was pretended a ſhield had dropped from heaven. This was to have the power of averting ſuch viſitations; and the peſtilence

ſoon after ceaſing, its miraculous qualities became undoubted. To prevent its being carried away by any perſon, eleven more were made, ſo like it as not to be diſtinguiſhed. The twelve were then placed in the temple of Mars, and an equal number of prieſts, called Salii, were appointed to them. At ſtated times, they afterwards perambulated the ſtreets with theſe ſhields, ſtriking them with ſhort ſwords; and at the ſame time performing a myſtic dance, which was highly venerated by this ſuperſtitious people.

Amongſt other temples, Numa raiſed one to Faith, by which the moſt ſolemn oaths were taken. He likewiſe erected the celebrated temple to Janus, whoſe gates were ſhut in peace, but open in war. To prevent quarrels, either domeſtic or foreign, he inſtituted new deities, called Termini. Theſe were images ſet up on the boundary of the Roman territories, and alſo between the lands of private citizens; and they were deemed ſo ſacred, that any man might ſlay with impunity, whoever was found in the act of removing them.

A Pontifex Maximus, was another office of Numa's creation, which he beſtowed on his relation Numa Marcius. To him belonged the chief ſuperintendence of religious affairs; but ſtill, as I apprehend, in ſubordination to the crown. There does not appear to have been any ſettled creed, or number of deities fixed for Rome. They were therefore increaſed at the caprice of the people, or their rulers, and according to the idols and religious rites of thoſe who afterwards incorporated with them.

Numa obſerved, that too great a diſtinction yet remained between his Roman and Sabine ſubjects. In order to blend them effectually, he united all who profeſſed one trade into a company. To each company he then aſſigned particular privileges, with the liberty of making by-laws for themſelves: And by theſe means the differences between Sabines and Romans ceaſed; being transferred to the diſtinction of companies, which were indifferently compoſed of both nations.

A parent's right over his child was a little reſtrained by Numa: for though he might

ſtill inflict death, he could not from henceforth ſell a ſon that was married. A ſtrange law is imputed to this legiſlator, which is, that a man might lend his wife to another, provided ſhe had firſt borne one child to himſelf. The Sabines are ſaid to have been of Spartan origin; and indeed, this indelicacy ſtrongly ſavours of it. But of all Numa's regulations, none deſerves more notice than his attention to agriculture. He obliged the poorer citizens to ſettle on the conquered lands; and by the countenance and protection of this peaceful Prince, tillage became not only general but honourable.

Another work of Numa, was the regulation of the calendar. Romulus had only ten months, of which ſix had thirty days, and the reſt thirty-one. To remedy ſo groſs an error, January and February were added, March being the firſt month of the Roman year. February had only twenty-eight days, whilſt all the reſt had twenty nine or thirty-one. This was done from a ſuperſtition, that odd numbers were lucky, and even ones unfortunate. Theſe months altogether made three

hundred and fifty-five days; and an intercalary month of twenty-two days was added every other year, in order to bring it near the ſolar revolution.

During the whole reign of Numa, the doors of Janus's temple were not once opened; and as it was a long one, the inhabitants of Rome increaſed with great rapidity. In it and its territory, there were now forty-ſeven thouſand citizens fit to bear arms. Their women, children, and ſlaves, amounted to many times that number. Every thing proſpered under this wiſe and virtuous ſovereign; and at length, full of years and true glory, he deſcended to the grave. The grief expreſſed at this event was ſincere and exceſſive, nor was it confined to his own ſubjects. The neighbouring ſtates had often ſuffered by the ambition of Romulus, and juſtly prized the peaceful diſpoſition of Numa. They therefore attended his funeral rites, and blended their tears with thoſe of the Sabines and Romans.

Numa left no male iſſue, and Tullus Hoſtilius, who was both of Sabine and Roman ex-

traction, was elected to the throne. He began with distributing a part of the crown lands amongst the most indigent, thereby rendering himself extremely popular. But the most remarkable event of his reign, was the battle of the Horatii and Curiatii. In consequence of a quarrel between Rome and Alba, the armies of both took the field; but when they came within view of each other, and recollected that Alba was the parent state, a treaty instead of a battle took place. It was agreed, that they should henceforth be one people; and three combatants from each, were to decide to which city the seat of empire should belong.

The Alban army produced three brothers, named the Curiatii, as their champions. Among the Romans, there were also three brethren, called Horatii, to whom their cause was likewise trusted; and the contest was to take place between the two armies.

The mothers of the Horatii and Curiatii were sisters. In memory of their past friendship and affinity, they therefore most tenderly embraced each other; but this being over,

they regarded only their duty to their reſpective ſtates, engaging in the moſt deadly ſtrife. The Curiatii at firſt appeared victorious; for though they all were wounded, two of the Horatii were dead, and the ſurvivor, though unhurt, appeared to fly. The Curiatii purſued, and from their countrymen a ſhout of victory was heard. But ſtratagem, not fear, made Horatius thus retire. By doing ſo he ſeparated his adverſaries, and ſuddenly turning, the foremoſt fell beneath his arm; the ſecond ſhared his fate; and the laſt became an eaſy prey. The ſhout of triumph was now transferred to the Roman forces, and Fuffetius, the Alban general, paid homage to Hoſtilius.

A ſiſter to Horatius had been betrothed to one of the Curiatii, and diſtracted at his loſs, ſhe loaded her victorious brother with reproaches. Overcome with paſſion, he neither liſtened to fraternal affection, or to that pity which was due to her misfortune, but ſtabbed her to the heart. He was inſtantly ſeized and brought before the Duumviri, who ſat in judgment on murderers. Their ſen-

tence was death; on which he appealed to the people at large. By them his life was ſpared; but inſtead of beſtowing the honours due to a conqueror, they obliged him to paſs under the yoke, as if he had cowardly fled from an enemy.

Though the Albans apparently ſubmitted, Fuffetius moſt anxiouſly ſought for a favourable opportunity to break the agreement. His deſigns were at length fully diſcloſed to Hoſtilius; who thereupon got Fuffetius and his principal officers into his power. He put them to death, on which their forces united with the Romans, and having deſtroyed the city of Alba, he removed its inhabitants to Rome. He was ſucceſsful on ſeveral other occaſions, and greatly added to the ſtrength and territories of this riſing country.

Hoſtilius and all his family periſhed in their palace, by its being conſumed to aſhes. This was by ſome aſcribed to lightning; but Ancus Marcius, the next king, was not a little ſuſpected. He was the grandſon of Numa, by a daughter who married Numa Marcius, the

Pontifex Maximus: and to this connexion he probably owed his election to the crown.

Titus Tatius had only united one tribe of Sabines to Rome. Beſides them, there were ſeveral others with whom Marcius was engaged in frequent wars. He was generally ſucceſsful, and the Latines, Volſci, and other neighbouring ſtates, alſo felt the power of his arms. Many of the people whom he ſubdued, were tranſplanted to Rome, which was greatly increaſed; and its territories now reached to the ſea, where the city and port of Oſtia began to flouriſh. On account of his victories, Marcius twice entered Rome in triumph; and he greatly added to the extent and power of his country. At his death, he left two ſons, the eldeſt of whom was only fifteen, committing them to the care of Tarquinius, a man who was indebted to him for many obligations.

Tarquinius was not a native of Rome, but had brought vaſt riches there. He had alſo highly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the field: and this, added to a very munificent diſpoſition, had rendered him extremely popular.

Marcius had paid great attention to his merits, and probably hoped that his intereſt would procure his ſon to be elected to the throne; but ambition interfered, and Tarquinius ſolicited and obtained it for himſelf.

It was chiefly to the Plebeian order, that Tarquinius owed his exaltation. He therefore added one hundred to the ſenate, out of that claſs of citizens. As war was the native caſt of this people, he likewiſe gratified them in military undertakings. The Latin cities were forced to acknowledge his ſuperiority: and the twelve Leucumonies of Hetruria, owned him as their ſuperior; at the ſame time preſenting him with all their enſigns of royalty. Theſe were a throne of ivory, a crown of gold, a ſceptre with an eagle on its top, a tunic embroidered with gold and figures of palm branches, and a purple robe enriched with flowers of different colours. Before he uſed ſuch decorations, he aſked and obtained permiſſion from the ſenate, who together with the people, alſo voted him three different triumphs; and it is in this

reign that the regular and ſplendid manner of celebrating them, is ſaid to have commenced.

To Tarquin, whoſe father was a Corinthian, Rome owed ſome of its greateſt improvements. He erected a circus after the model of that in which the Olympic games were performed. It was ſo capacious, as to hold moſt, if not all of his ſubjects, to whom he exhibited various ſports and entertainments. He ſurrounded the city with a wall of hewn ſtone. Vaſt aqueducts were made by his order, for a regular ſupply of water. To keep the city clean, he cauſed ſuch ſewers under ground, as even in after ages ſurpriſed the beholder; and as an acknowledgment for his own good fortune, he laid the foundation of a great temple, called the Capitol. This was built on the Tarpeian rock, and dedicated to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva.

But all theſe ſucceſſes and improvements could not ſecure the life of Tarquin. The ſons of Ancus Marcius ſecretly plotted his deſtruction, and their deſign was haſtened by Servius Tullius obtaining the daughter of

Tarquin in marriage. Tullius was only the ſon of a Latin woman, who had been brought a captive to Rome; but his courage and abilities ſupplied the place of birth, and raiſed him to the higheſt favour with his ſovereign. From this new connection, it was ſuppoſed he was alſo deſigned for his ſucceſſor; and as every day muſt ſtrengthen his proſpects, the Marcii reſolved to be quick in what they meditated. Aſſaſſins were accordingly employed by them, and Tarquin was diſpatched within the walls of his own palace.

This event cauſed an immediate uproar among the people; but Tanaquil, the wife of Tarquin, with wonderful preſence of mind appeared to them, aſſuring them, that though the king was wounded, he was not in danger. This ſhe did to gain time, and the aſſaſſins being taken immediately after they had ſlain the king, diſcloſed their employers. The ſons of Marcius, who knew nothing more than the public rumour, therefore fled, inſtead of ſetting up any claim to the crown; and Tanaquil, with her ſon-in-law, having prepared all the friends of Tarquin's family,

the real fact was declared: on which, as they had agreed, Servius Tullius boldly ſeized on the ſovereignty.

The meanneſs of his birth being an effectual barrier to his being acknowledged by the ſenate, he reſolved to court the people. For this purpoſe, he paid out of his own treaſures the debts of the moſt indigent; and ſtripping the Patricians of conquered lands, which they had illegally poſſeſſed themſelves of, he gave them to ſuch citizens as he thought proper. By theſe means the multitude were at his devotion, and he was thereby enabled to bid defiance to the higher orders.

The Hetrurians had revolted, ſo ſoon as they knew of Tarquin's death. Tullius, therefore, marched againſt them, and not only reduced them to obedience, but took a conſiderable territory from their former boundary. This he alſo diſtributed amongſt his Plebeian ſubjects; and being now ſecure of their affections, he reſolved to gain ſomething like a title to the crown. He, therefore, offered himſelf to their choice; and, as he foreſaw, was immediately elected: but the

ſenate peremptorily refuſed their acquieſcence. That body alſo withheld their aſſent from three different triumphs, voted by the people, though they were not able to prevent their celebration.

The regulations made by Tullius were of the higheſt importance. He cultivated the favour, yet diminiſhed the power of the people. But in doing this, he was far from offending; becauſe he at the ſame time removed their greateſt burthens; and, in my opinion, Rome was highly indebted to the exertions of this monarch.

The three tribes inſtituted by Romulus were confined to the city; whilſt thoſe who inhabited its territories were as yet unincorporated. Tullius now added a fourth tribe to Rome, and beſides it fifteen new ones were formed in its dominions. In order to keep the increaſe of numbers nearly equal in each, he alſo enacted, that no man could be enrolled in any tribe but that of which he was born. The country tribes had their reſpective magiſtrates, places of ſtrength, temples and

prieſts; and he inſtituted ſuch regulations, as reduced them to perfect order.

Great diſtinctions, in point of fortune, had already ariſen among the Romans; yet every citizen was taxed alike, and equally bound to military ſervice at his own expence. To rectify this, Tullius divided the whole into ſix claſſes. The firſt was compoſed of ſuch as poſſeſſed ten thouſand drachmæ; and they were ſub-divided into ninety-eight companies or centuries. Eighteen of theſe centuries conſtituted the cavalry of Rome, and horſes were to be provided at the public expence: and the remainder were to ſerve as infantry when called on, as were alſo all who made up the other claſſes. The qualification for the ſecond rank was ſeven thouſand five hundred drachmæ, and they made up twenty centuries, to whom were added two centuries not ſo rich, who were compoſed of ſmiths, carpenters, and other workmen. The third claſs had not leſs than five thouſand drachmæ, and were divided into twenty centuries. The fourth were of ſuch who poſſeſſed one thouſand two hundred and fifty drachmæ, and made twenty centuries alſo, and to them

were added two centuries of trumpeters and ſounders of horns. The fifth was of men who had five hundred drachmæ, making thirty centuries. And the ſixth claſs were compoſed of the reſt of the citizens, who were only reckoned a ſingle century. For you are to obſerve, though centuries originally meant hundreds, in the preſent caſe it was applied to any indefinite number.

Having thus adjuſted his ſix orders, Tullius proceeded to a new mode of taxation and levies. Both were laid upon centuries, each of which was to furniſh the ſame ſum and number of men; and the burthens of the ſtate were thereby placed on thoſe who were beſt able to bear them. The richer claſſes did not diſlike this, becauſe it prevented thoſe, whoſe poverty might render them dangerous, from acquiring the uſe of arms: And, by another regulation, Tullius prevented the opinion of an ignorant mob from overbearing the judgment of thoſe who had better opportunities of being informed; for inſtead of allowing every individual to vote on public queſtions, he polled them by cen-

turies. Every man indeed had a voice in his reſpective century, the majority deciding what vote the century would give: But then the firſt claſs had alone a majority of votes, if unanimous; the whole amounting to one hundred and ninety-three centuries, of which ninety-eight belonged to the wealthieſt order. Thus an evident ſuperiority was given to thoſe who might be ſuppoſed the beſt informed, and moſt intereſted in the proſperity of their country; whilſt, on the other hand, their ſervices and taxes were in an exact proportion to their wealth and influence: and I really think this regulation, as to theſe important parts of government, has not yet been excelled.

Servius Tullius foreſaw, that as property is fluctuating, it would be frequently neceſſary to recur to firſt principles. He therefore inſtituted a Cenſus, or Luſtrum, every five years, by which an account of the ſituation, and number of inhabitants was to be taken. Such alterations were then to be made, as ſhould keep up the ſpirit of theſe regulations; but this was afterwards often neglected.

The ſituation of the ſlaves was likewiſe alleviated by Tullius. He gave them particular deities, whoſe ſervice was performed by prieſts of their own body, and at certain ſeaſons they were exempted from labour. It was likewiſe allowed, that when their maſters thought proper to emancipate them, they might become Roman citizens. But they could only be enrolled in one or other of the city tribes, and they were to retain the name of Liberti, or Freedmen.

Though the Sabines and Latines acknowledged the ſuperiority of Rome, many differences aroſe between them. The better to prevent them, Tullius raiſed a temple to Diana at his capital, at the joint expence of the three nations. Here they celebrated an annual feſtival, and deputies attended to ſettle all differences that might have ariſen. Several temples to Fortune were alſo built by this King, as he held himſelf particularly indebted to that goddeſs.

But all the wiſe and great acts of Tullius could neither remove the antipathy of the ſenate, nor ſecure him from domeſtic villany.

Tarquin had left two infant ſons, named Lucius and Aruns. When they arrived at maturity, Tullius thought he could not better diſcharge his obligations to their father, than by giving them two of his daughters in marriage. This double union had however very different conſequences from what he expected. The wife of Aruns was attached to Lucius, and Lucius returned it. Both were infamous, and removing the obſtacles to their union by poiſon, they at length united in marriage. But their guilt did not even ſtop here, for they now plotted the murder of Tullius. Lucius Tarquin well knew the antipathy which the ſenate bore to him; and building on it, he determined to deſtroy his father-in-law, even in their preſence. He, therefore, viſited the aged King, in the midſt of the aſſembled ſenate, and dragging him out of the place where they met, he quickly cauſed him to be diſpatched. The wife of Tarquin, who was privy to the intended ſlaughter of her father, ſoon after came to this ſpot in her chariot; and, by her orders, was drove over the remains of him from whom ſhe derived her birth. And to cloſe

the dreadful ſcene, Tullius's wife either expired of grief, or, as is more likely, was alſo put out of the way on the enſuing morning.

It is no very pleaſing picture of Roman manners to add, that the ſenate raiſed Lucius Tarquinius to the vacant throne. But ſo it was, and in my next æra you will ſee its conſequences. No other Italian or European ſtates remain at preſent to be treated of; and I ſhall, therefore, in this place, cloſe my account of the world prior to the Medo-Perſian Empire.

SIXTH LETTER.

FROM the year 790, to the year 536, a gradual, but at the ſame time a wonderful, progreſs took place in the advancement of knowledge and ſociety. Aſſyria, Babylon, and Lydia, had indeed paſſed their ſummit, yielding to a more virtuous, and conſequently a more powerful body of men. But another people were now improving on all the arts that had before enlightened the world.

Theſe were the Greeks, both of Europe and Aſia-Minor. Their buildings diſplayed

a ſuperior taſte, and muſic and poetry began to flouriſh amongſt them. To the Egyptian and Babyloniſh knowledge of aſtronomy, Thales had added the mode of calculating eclipſes. To him is likewiſe aſcribed the aſcertaining of the Little Bear being ſo near the North Pole, as to be the beſt direction for mariners. Thales alſo entertained juſter notions of the Deity than any other of the early Heathens. He defined God to be a Being without beginning or end, who knew our thoughts and actions, and to whom virtue alone could be acceptable. The ſect, called Ionic, took their riſe from this Philoſopher, and their principal tenet was, that water firſt exiſted, and out of it God created all things.

The laws of Draco and Solon were engraven on wooden tables. Before this, the regulations of the Heathens were handed down by tradition, or fluctuated at the will of thoſe in whom abſolute power was veſted. This was, therefore, a great ſtride in the Athenians to the ſecurity of life and property; and the influence of their example ſoon extended into other countries.

The drama had its origin in the days of Solon, under Theſpis, who introduced it at Athens; nor do we know that men and women were ever before perſonated for public entertainment. Hierophylus, a Grecian ſurgeon, ſomewhat about the ſame time, began the ſtudy of anatomy: And we find Sanchoniathon, Beroſus, and Manetho, giving a beginning to proſe compoſition. In the art of navigation, an immenſe progreſs had been made; for the voyage round the Cape of Good Hope is really aſtoniſhing. Add to this, that although the firſt ſhip among the Greeks, fit for any thing but coaſting, was the Argo; yet now almoſt every iſland and ſtate of Greece poſſeſſed conſiderable fleets, with which they carried on commerce—planted colonies—and even decided their quarrels on the ocean.

The firſt, and moſt ſimple form of government, was monarchical. This was naturally derived from the Patriarchal ſtate. But men too often found in the ſovereign a tyrant; and as the world became more enlightened, they thought of means to prevent ſuch an abuſe of power. We, therefore, find the

Greeks trying the Ariſtocratic, the Democratic, and mixed forms of government. At Sparta and Rome they had limited monarchies, admirably calculated for good order, without deſtroying the liberty of the ſubject: For though the laws of Sparta were far from eligible, that was no fault of the conſtitution; and I am inclined to think its form of government, except that one King would have been better than two, preferable even to that of Rome. But when we compare both laws and conſtitution together, the Roman government was certainly the wiſeſt that had yet appeared amongſt mankind.

A vaſt progreſs was made towards the ſettling of Europe, between the reigns of Pul and Cyrus. But nothing can more ſtrongly prove the thinneſs of its inhabitants, than the beginning of Macedon, juſt in the neighbourhood of Greece. New kingdoms cannot ariſe in the midſt of populous or civilized nations; and the ſingle city of Ægæ could neither have been built, nor have grown to conſequence, had there been any powerful ſtate in that quarter. In Italy, behold alſo the humble beginning of Rome. And though

colonies were every day planting in Spain, France, and other parts, thoſe countries are as yet ſcarcely known even by name. The infancy of the world, and its progreſſion, appears from another circumſtance. Fabulous accounts are ceaſing, and mental powers begin to be more prized than bodily ſtrength. Before the times of Pul we find mere brutal qualifications obtaining every honour. But now the ſeven wiſe men of Greece are in higher eſtimation than conquerors. Solon and Lycurgus are placed before Hercules, Achilles, and all the Grecian warriors. And even in Rome, the peaceful virtues of Numa were preferred to all the ambitious actions of Romulus, its bloody and its conquering founder.

Thus every thing proves the progreſſion of the world. Its ſtates, its inhabitants, its arts, and its conveniencies, are increaſing in a regular order. What then becomes of mere aſſertions, and the wild unfounded conjectures of ſcepticiſm? How are we to conceive, that the earth and its inhabitants have exiſted from all eternity? Where is the Chineſe Empire in the year 536, which unbe-

lievers aſſert to have exiſted before the ſcripture account of the creation of this world? On what ground is it that men dare ſet up opinions, contradictory to all true hiſtory, both ſacred and prophane? Opinions, that are totally incompatible, not only with the Bible, but with that progreſs of population—of ſociety—of knowledge—and of ſtates—which cannot even be controverted.

As to you, I am not afraid of your being miſled, becauſe I truſt you will be well acquainted with the real and beſt accounts of the world. But I cannot read, without deteſtation, the works of men, who, by their perverted abilities, ſeek to overturn thoſe divine truths, which are the real foundations of virtue and human felicity. To thoſe who diligently ſeek, ſuch attempts will however for ever prove ineffectual: and I moſt ardently pray, that your life may be ſuch, as to make you conſider annihilation the moſt horrid of all ideas; whilſt, on the other hand, you will contemplate an eternity of exiſtence, as the brighteſt and moſt glorious hope that is afforded to mortality.

END OF THIRD ÆRA.

MUSEUM BRITANNICUM